THE WAR IN VIETNAM

THE VIEW FROM A SOUTHERN COMMUNITY

BROWNSVILLE, HAYWOOD COUNTY, TENNESSEE

JAN VOOGT

For Joke with love, and for our children
Aleide, Constantijn, and Maurits Jan,
who shared the American adventure with us.

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Time present and time past
Are both perhaps present in time future
And time future contained in time past.

T.S. Eliot

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CONTENTS

GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ARVN	Army of the Republic of Vietnam
B-52	American Long-Range Heavy Bomber
CAR	Children of the American Revolution
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CINCPAC	Commander in Chief, Pacific
CORE	Congress of Racial Equality
CSA	Confederate States of America
DAR	Daughters of the American Revolution
DMZ	Demilitarized Zone between North and South Vietnam
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
HEW	Department of Health, Education and Welfare
ICU	Intensive Care Unit
JAG	Judge Advocate General
JAYCEE	Member of a Junior Chamber of Commerce
JCS	Joint Chiefs of Staff
KIA	Killed in Action
KKK	Ku Klux Klan
MAAG	Military Assistance Advisory Group, Vietnam
MACV	Military Assistance Command, Vietnam
MEDEVAC	Short for "Medical Evacuation" by Air
MIA	Missing in Action
NAACP	National Association for the Advancement of Colored People

NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NVA	North Vietnamese Army
PTSD	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
POW	Prisoner of War
PX	Post Exchange; Military Store
ROTC	Reserve Officers' Training Corps
R&R	Rest and Recuperation
SAC	Strategic Air Command
SDS	Students for a Democratic Society
SEATO	Southeast Asia Treaty Organization
SMM	Saigon Military Mission
SP/4	Army Specialist Fourth Class
TDY	Temporary Duty
UCV	United Confederate Veterans
USO	United Service Organizations
VA	Veterans' Administration
VC	Vietcong
VFW	Veterans of Foreign Wars

INTRODUCTION

The objective of the present study is to try and establish the impact of the Vietnam War (1960-1973) on one specific area of the American South, Brownsville and Haywood County, Tennessee. This region is in many ways characteristic of the American South, as I hope my study will show. An important element in my choosing that particular region for my research is that I lived there in 1986 and 1987, teaching English at Haywood High School. I had at my disposal the records in the local Elma Ross Library where I also examined the relevant issues of the *Brownsville States-Graphic*. I met, and learned a great deal from, the members of the local community. This enabled me to conduct interviews with a considerable number of them. Many of my findings are based on these interviews.

My study focuses on three sets of questions. A first set of questions addresses the role played in the reception of the Vietnam War by the historic consciousness, by the Southernness of the inhabitants of Brownsville and Haywood County and, by extension, of the Southern region as a whole. To what extent is the perspective of this community and the Southern region on that war colored by the continued presence, by the living memory of the Civil War, the war that has refused to go away? Is there still a characteristically Southern perspective on American involvement in Foreign Wars?

A second series of questions concerns the impact the War in Vietnam has had on the continuity of the culture of the Brownsville community and the region to which it belongs. An important area of research here is in the local race relations. The War in Vietnam coincided partially with the civil rights movement. In Brownsville the history of the registration of black voters is well-documented, and though outright violence was avoided, there was a great deal of social tension that touched the whole fabric of the community. What role in all this was played by the Vietnam War?

The third set of questions is related to the nature of the writing of history. In the field of official history, for instance, there is a plethora of books on America's involvement in Vietnam, ranging from Chester L. Cooper's *The Lost Crusade: America in Vietnam* (1970) to *On Strategy: A Critical Analysis of the Vietnam War* (1982) by col. Harry G. Summers, Jr., and Robert S. McNamara's *In Retrospect: The Tragedy and Lessons of Vietnam* (1995). A different approach to the writing of history is found in oral history. Alessandro Portelli, for example, in his *The Death of Luigi Trastulli and Other Stories: Form and Meaning in Oral History*, saw there was more to history than "presidents and generals".[1] In oral history, in the words of Donald A. Ritchie, the voices of ordinary men and women are recorded "to construct a more diverse and accurate portrait of the past".[2] Applied to the Vietnam era this means

that the experiences, memories, and opinions of the population of Brownsville and Haywood County, and of the soldiers from this community who fought in Vietnam, enrich our understanding of the Vietnam War era. Therefore, in a chapter called "Towards an Oral History", I discuss a series of interviews with a cross section of the local community about the War in Vietnam and related subjects, such as the draft and deferments. Since the area where I conducted my research is situated in the South, I also discuss the culture and history of the region, to see whether against this background the War in Vietnam appears in a different light. I will adopt Ritchie's argument that "oral history is - appropriate not only for looking at the broad sweep of a community's history but for examining it at a specific time . . .".[3]

Both official history and oral history have their advantages, but there are drawbacks as well. For example, "oral history interviews", Ritchie reminds us, "are often conducted years after the event, when memories have grown imprecise".[4] The interviewer, however, can interrupt the flow of memory whenever the need arises, to clarify a point or to get a more precise answer. Traditionally, it is assumed that archival documents are more reliable than a taped interview, but documents can be incomplete, inaccurate, and deceiving.[5] For example, the rather dramatic turn of events in Brownsville and Haywood County, Tennessee, in connection with the civil rights movement during the era of the Vietnam War, was reported in a rather circumspect way by the local *Brownsville States-Graphic*. The private file of Mrs. Reese Moses, an experienced newspaper reporter, containing notes, drafts of articles, and an extensive collection of newspaper clippings, as well as my interviews with Mrs. Reese Moses, and Mr. Earl Rice, the vice principal of Haywood High School, have enabled me to provide a clearer picture of the struggle for civil rights in Brownsville and Haywood County. The most significant source of information, then, for my research, is to be found in the numerous interviews I conducted with Brownsville people. Having lived in Brownsville for a year, I encountered few problems in meeting interested white parties. Significantly, though, it was much harder to find black people willing to be interviewed.

Another important source for my research was the local newspaper, the *Brownsville States-Graphic*. Its coverage of the War in Vietnam and of the racial tension before and during the era of the civil rights movement was of great interest to my attempt to analyze the nature of the continuity or discontinuity of the community's culture. In this respect the articles, editorials, and columns about the Civil War, also published in the local newspaper during the Vietnam War era, were important. They demonstrate that traditional printed historical sources sustain and support the oral histories, at least in terms of broad themes.

Beyond an examination of the newspaper on microfilm in the Elma Ross Library, and a series of interviews with members of the community, my research has concentrated on those distinctive features of the region

that together constitute Southern culture. These distinctive features are reflected in particular in literature. Therefore, yet another source of information is provided by American literature on the Vietnam War. I have considered how Southern culture is reflected in American literature and also how the Vietnam War experience found its way into American literature. In my examination of Vietnam War literature I have distinguished between Southern and non-Southern writers. The distinction is necessary to determine the precise nature of the legacy of the War in Vietnam on Southern culture of which Southern literature is an integral part.

In the decades following the American withdrawal from Vietnam, there have been many novels, an even larger number of biographies, autobiographies, memoirs, and oral histories, as well as an increasing number of scholarly books and articles about the War in Vietnam. A large number of courses is taught on a wide range of subjects connected with the War in Vietnam in many colleges and universities.[6] Taken together these phenomena point to the permanent hold that the memory of the conflict in Southeast Asia has on the American nation. It is beyond the scope of the present study to examine the whole field critically. Information related to it can be found in the *Encyclopedia of the Vietnam War*, a major scholarly achievement.[7]

As shown above, the cultural artifacts bearing witness today to the impact of the Vietnam War are impressive, especially when we realize that it belongs to the recent past. How dramatic, then, were the repercussions of the War in Vietnam compared to the Civil War for Brownsville and Haywood County, and the South? Does the Civil War still cast a longer shadow in the communities of the South, as, for example, in West Tennessee? Is any possible dissimilarity between the South and other American regions as regards the War in Vietnam reflected in American literature? The non-Southern writer Philip Caputo has called the Vietnam War the only war "we have ever lost". Do Southern writers look upon the Vietnam War in a similar way?

The structure of my study is as follows: after a chapter that deals with a description of Southern culture in its widest sense, which includes a discussion of Vietnam War literature by Southern writers, and the history of the South in general and Brownsville, Haywood County, in particular, I turn to an investigation of the local newspaper, concentrating on its treatment of the Civil War, race relations, the draft, and the Vietnam War. The *Brownsville States-Graphic* is a typically Southern newspaper in that it reflects an intimacy with the region's culture, and functions as the local community bulletin board. As such its back-issues provided me with a store of information. I have structured my research of the newspaper as the public record along the following lines. First, I examine the front page articles published during the Vietnam War era. Next, I discuss three columnists from the *Brownsville States-Graphic* and their perspectives on these matters. This study traces how their subject matter moved between

the distant Confederate past and the concerns of the South in the 1960s, from Southern history to 1960s politics. I also trace the newspaper's stance towards the political issues connected with the Vietnam War and the racial issues of the civil rights era. Finally, I discuss the editorials of the 1960-1973 period.

After this chapter that can usefully be termed "the public record" I turn to a series of interviews conducted with members of the local community. In these interviews I inquired to what extent members of the white and black communities felt their culture belonged to the Deep South, and I asked questions about their sense of history, patriotism (why were there fewer and less vocal anti-war demonstrations on Southern campuses, for instance?), sense of religion, their relation to the land, and to the community. I had noticed that segregation was the rule in the local community at least up to the time of the Vietnam War. I asked my interviewees to what extent they had been aware of how the War in Vietnam affected the other half of the community at the time. Were members of the white community aware of the death of a black soldier, and vice versa? Was it generally realized that as a result of the draft system the poor whites and blacks were sent to serve in Vietnam? My analysis of the answers provides a unique perspective.

1. *THE SOUTH: THE PRESENCE OF THE PAST IN THE PRESENT*

The Legacy of the Civil War in Southern Culture

"Let us begin by discussing the weather, for that has been the chief agency in making the South distinctive," runs the opening line of U.B. Phillips' 1929 classic *Life and Labor in the Old South*.[8] The controversy about what constitutes the South is long-standing. I will adopt the definition of J. Wayne Flynt, an authoritative historian of the South, who argues that

> applied to the antebellum period, the South generally refers to the eleven states from Virginia to Texas that constituted the Confederacy in 1861. . . . Following the war, the definition becomes more economic and cultural than political; hence the addition of Kentucky, West Virginia, and Oklahoma to the region.[9]

In any case, the South is different. Coming to this part of the United States for the first time, one is surprised by its warmth, in more than one sense. In 1778 William Henry Drayton, in the course of a debate in the South Carolina Assembly, said: "From the nature of the climate, soil, and produce of the several states, a northern and southern interest naturally and unavoidably arise."[10] Like Drayton, V.S. Naipaul, in *A Turn in the South*, points out the vegetation, ". . . the dogwood and the pines. It is what you see a lot of in the South."[11] Still, it is the people rather than the climate, the lush vegetation and all the exotic crops, that make the South really different from the rest of the United States. Novelist Mary Hood, a native of Georgia, in an article on the place of the writer in the American South (1986), defines the unique quality of the South as follows:

> Suppose a man is walking across a field. To the question "Who is that?" a Southerner would reply by saying something like "Wasn't his granddaddy the one whose dog and him got struck by lightning on the steel bridge? Mama's third cousin-dead before my time-found his railroad watch in that eight-pound catfish's stomach the next summer just above the dam. I think it was eight pounds. Big as Eunice's arm. The way he married for that new blue Cadillac automobile, reckon how come he's walking like he has on Sunday shoes, if that's who it is, and for sure it is." A Northerner would reply to the same question (only if directly asked, though, never volunteering), "That's Joe Smith." To which the Southerner might think (but be much too polite to say aloud), "They did not ask his name, they asked who he *is*!"[12]

Southerners have always taken a genuine interest in people. In this connection the large and well-equipped genealogy departments in the libraries of even modest cities may be pointed out with good reason. As a further case in point the front porch, which is the extension of the livingroom, allows Southerners to "shoot the breeze" with family, friends and acquaintances, and perhaps just as important, to be aware of the activities of neighbors and passers-by. In the modern South new property, like everywhere else in the United States, is constructed with a deck at the rear rather than with the traditional front porch. One should be aware of how important a role the latter has played - and in many places continues to play in Southern culture.

The South remains an enigma. Its enigmatic character appears from William Faulkner's probing questions that the editors of the *Encyclopedia of Southern Culture* have chosen from *Absalom, Absalom!*: "Tell about the South. What's it like there. What do they do there. Why do they live there. Why do they live at all." Faulkner's questions are a reflection of the mystery that the South continues to be to the rest of the world. Loaded symbols such as the Confederate statue, magnolias, Dixie-the-tune, Robert E. Lee, and the Confederate flag, have retained their charge.

"The South," as C.Vann Woodward has said, "is obviously American as well as Southern, and the first test of distinctiveness naturally lies in the establishment of a departure from the American norm."[13] Such widely different aspects as the racial composition of the people and the weather have been used alternately as distinctive features of a Southern identity.[14]

"We Southerners, thank God, are distinctive . . . We are different. Our stories, our land, our heritage, make us different. Southerners . . . are lucky. We are simply more interesting than people who live in other places. Our stories make it so." The lines quoted here from Susan Swagler's book column in *The Birmingham News* in 1996, reflect a feeling shared by many Southerners. It echoes the maxim, "American by Birth - Southern by the Grace of God."

The difference between the Southern sense of history and that of the rest of the Americans is brought out in a novel about the Vietnam War and its aftermath by Bobbie Ann Mason. In *In Country* (1985) three generations of Southerners travel to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in the nation's capital. The youngest is the eighteen-year-old daughter of a soldier killed in Vietnam. She is, as Owen W. Gilman, Jr., argues, in pursuit of the real Vietnam.[15] Southerners are portrayed as much more in touch with their past, and, therefore, as having a far greater understanding of the monument than non-Southern visitors. The ignorance of non-Southerners is suggested by the question asked by a schoolgirl near the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. "What are all these names anyway?"[16] She thus becomes, as Gilman argues, the perfect representation of a culture without a past.[17] The girl constitutes a significant contrast with the three generations of Southerners who visit the monument in pursuit of history.

To them history is not just an awareness of facts, but rather, in Allen Tate's definition, "knowledge carried to the heart".[18]

I will argue that a major difference between the South and the rest of the country is its history.[19]

> It is in just this respect that the South remains the most distinctive region of the country. In their unique historic experience as Americans the Southerners should not only be able to find the basis for continuity of their heritage but also make contributions that balance and complement the experience of the rest of the nation.[20]

When it became clear in the late 1960s that North Vietnam could not be defeated and the idea dawned that America was going to lose the war, Americans from all walks of life started to refer to the Vietnam War as the first war America would lose. President Johnson, for example, said that he could not be the first president to lose a war. Not all Americans felt this way, though. Many, especially in the South, felt that when America lost the Vietnam War, more than a century after the end of the Civil War, the rest of America would finally have caught up with the South. "The South had undergone an experience that it could share with no other part of America ... the experience of military defeat."[21] It was only after the Vietnam War had been lost that all Americans had become acquainted with defeat.

Ironically, the strongest support for the Vietnam War came from the South, as C. Vann Woodward has pointed out.[22] There is also the added fact that president Johnson and general Westmoreland, who both played an important part in the war, were Southerners. Quite obviously, the Southern attitude to the war in Southeast Asia was patriotic rather than critical. In the terminology of the Vietnam era, Southerners generally were hawks rather than doves. The line I will take in this study will be that the South's response to the Vietnam War was to a large extent filtered through its own Civil War experience. Focusing on this aspect I will discuss, first, the role of the Civil War presence in Southern culture today. This will be followed by a discussion of the extent to which the Vietnam War continues to haunt the South. I will argue that it is also through its experience of the Civil War, which for obvious reasons has been more keenly felt in the states of the former Confederacy than elsewhere in the United States, that the South has responded to America's losing the War in Vietnam.[23] I will consider the degree, then, to which the two wars are inextricably linked in Southern memory.

The immediacy of the Civil War past in the South is striking. It shows for instance in an article of 5 March 1996 in the *Birmingham Post-Herald* in which Phillip Rawls reports on the controversy surrounding the flags flown at the state Welcome Centers of Alabama. On 4 March

governor Fob James had ordered the Centers to start flying the two official flags of the Confederacy, "which have the Confederate battle flag in their upper left corner". On his weekly radio show the governor defended his action by saying that "it made him one hundred percent historically correct". James' action was a response to callers who had encouraged him to fly the Confederate battle flag at the eight Welcome Centers on interstate highways along the state's borders. The governor's choice for the official flags of the Confederacy was considered a "weak" step in the right direction by the chairman of the Confederate Heritage Fund in Andalusia, who was aware, of course, that the Centers had flown the Confederate battle flag until 1993, when then governor Jim Folsom ordered it replaced by the Stars and Bars, the flag used by the Confederacy when it was organized in 1861 in Montgomery. Folsom had chosen this particular flag, because it did not stir racial emotions like the battle flag, which was also flown by the Ku Klux Klan.

> The first official flag adopted by the Confederate Congress in 1863 had a white field, with the Confederate battle flag in the upper left corner. That flag looked like a surrender flag when it was limp, so the Confederate Congress modified it in 1865 with a red vertical stripe on the right side.[24]

It was this latter flag that governor James wanted to reintroduce at the state's Welcome Centers. He commented that he always wanted to be one hundred percent historically correct and one hundred percent politically incorrect, thus making it obvious where his sympathies lay. Black congressman John Rogers was convinced that the new flags containing the battle flag would "send a bad message to tourists". Governor James "is just showing people coming to Alabama how stupid we are - *that we're still fighting the Civil War*" [my emphasis]. The great attention still paid to the story of *Gone with the Wind,* and the destruction of Atlanta is another sign.

Also, the Mason-Dixon line, far from being a relic of the past, has continued to function as a dividing line between the South and the rest of the United States to the present day. The introductory paragraph for instance of the newspaper review of *Where Peachtree Meets Sweet Auburn (*New York, 1996), a historical novel about the history of Atlanta, reads: "Just in time for the torch [of the Olympic Games], here comes a big book by a newspaper reporter who carries a torch for Atlanta, and it is a good book for Yankees to read to get the flavor of the city before the Games begin."[25] The final fragment of the concluding sentence is worth quoting in this respect: ". . .this is a book worth any Yankee's dollar". The bantering style of the article is typical of references of a particular kind to the former Civil War and all it entails. The fact that the old Civil War

contrasts were mentioned at all in the above book review is characteristic of the lingering emotions still shared by many Southerners.[26]

An article in the *Brownsville States-Graphic* on 30 April, 1998, during Confederate History Month, may serve to show that the Civil War past is never far away in the South, even on the level of a small-town community. First, it was reported that two of the last surviving general officers of the United Confederate Veterans (U.C.V.), former U.S. congressman Rice A. Pierce and Harry R. Lee, both Tennesseans, made history, when, dressed in their finest Confederate reunion uniforms, they were received at the White House by president Franklin D. Roosevelt in December 1933. Secondly, the article mentioned that for over fifty years after Reconstruction, if a man were running for public office who had not served in the Confederate Army, he was at a distinct disadvantage.

A more permanent example of the presence of the Confederate past in Southern culture today, is the Civil War monument in Brownsville. A visitor from California noticed the monument of the Confederate soldier on the courthouse lawn, and asked why the soldier was saluting with his left hand. The local newspaper was glad to set the record straight: "The soldier is shielding his eyes from the sun as he looks to see if any Yankees are coming from Jackson . . .Our men in gray may have been ill-fed, poorly clothed and equipped, but they knew how to salute."(March 19, 1998)

The statue of the Confederate soldier is a characteristic feature of Southern towns; this is reflected in American literature. In Winston Groom's *As Summers Die* we find:

> These were the years when each town's chapter of the Daughters of the Confederacy carefully selected deserving negro families to receive Thanksgiving and Christmas baskets, . . . stopping, no doubt, somewhere along the way home to shed a tear at the omnipresent statue of the Confederate soldier (who, naturally, always faced south).[27]

In Tobias Wolff's *In Pharaoh's Army*, we find a soldier of the Vietnam era saying, "When, browsing through a bookstore, I came across a collection of letters sent home by Southern troops during the Civil War, *I heard their voices as those of men I'd known.*"[28] [my emphasis] In Wolff's fiction the past seemingly coincides with the present.

The memory of the Civil War is kept very much alive in the pages of the local newspaper. In October 1995, for instance, "Genealogy Genie" reported in the *Brownsville States-Graphic* that:

> Mrs. Harriett Smith, George Hood and others have worked long and diligently in an endeavor to secure the needed information for

> grave stones for Civil War veterans buried in the Trinity Cem[e]tery. Today the list is narrowed down to Kenneth Rainier, born 1841, died 1898, and W.W. Vaughn, born 1836, died 1878. Although both have nice monuments, no one knows anything about their families or where they served in the war.

Another example: in June 1967 Mrs. Harbert Thornton sent a clipping from a Nashville paper to the editor of the *Brownsville States-Graphic* [June 1967]. It contained the question, "At the outbreak of the Civil War, who was accounted the richest man in Tennessee?" The answer was: James Bond of Brownsville, who owned 600 slaves and much property. Thirty years later interest in the Civil War had not waned. In May 1996, for instance, community members were invited to attend the memorial service for veterans of the Civil War at Stanton Cemetery. The Rev. Chris Scruggs, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Brownsville, was the scheduled speaker. Later that year the *Brownsville States-Graphic* published Larry McGehee's article "Perryville: the ending of a beginning", about the biggest battle fought in Kentucky in the Civil War. This battle is commemorated because if it had been won by the Confederate Army, "there might have been a permanent nation of Confederate States of America". Yet another example: it was reported on 23 January, 1997, in the social column of the *Brownsville States-Graphic* that "Mary Ann and Lynn Shaw held an open house in their home on Park Avenue last Sunday afternoon honoring the birthday of general Robert E. Lee." The past is evoked so uncannily here that an innocent reader might think the general would be present at the party. Of course, Lee would be very much present in spirit.

The Civil War, like the Vietnam War, and indeed like any major war in history, also was a war of "firsts". The wartime inventions so designated constitute a link with the present. Thus the machine gun was introduced in the 1861 - 1865 war, as was the multi-manned submarine. It was the latter relic of the Civil War that quite literally emerged more than a century later. In April 1996, *USA Today* reported the start of "a three-week expedition to determine the condition of the Confederate submarine Hunley". In February 1864 this submarine had sunk the Union blockade ship Housatonic about four miles off Sullivans Island, "becoming the first submarine in history to sink an enemy warship". The tiny 40-foot submarine had apparently foundered as it tried to pull away from the sinking vessel.

Finally, how can Southerners forget the Confederate past when famous Civil War battles are re-enacted all over the South every year? They are often taken to be walk-through history lessons. It is through events like these that the Civil War past is vividly remembered. The examples cited above indicate that the Confederate or Civil War past continues to permeate Southern culture.

Without an awareness of the complexity of what constitutes Southern culture today, the answer to the question asked on the eve of Independence Day in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, "Why is there no national holiday recognizing the American Civil War?" would be elusive.[29] The answer must be that it lies in the persistence of painful memories, such as the fact that a quarter of a million men died in the war, as a result of which many women never married.[30] It lies in the crucial Confederate defeat at Gettysburg in July 1863. Was it not always the morning of July 3 for William Faulkner? The answer also lies in the adverse, divisive element that such a remembrance would have. The fact that the question should be asked at all is ample proof of the enduring nature of the burden of the past in present-day Southern culture.

The Legacy of the Vietnam War in American and Southern Culture

A dramatic effect of the Vietnam War on American society is found in the way it has influenced American foreign policy. The handling of the war by president Lyndon Johnson and president Richard Nixon weakened the trust that the American people had in government. As a result every following president has been forced to a much closer cooperation with the U.S. Senate and Congress, before committing any troops in any foreign conflict. It explains former president Bush's cautious approach to the Iraq-Kuwait conflict. After the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait on 2 August 1990, the president consulted the U.S. Congress, making sure he had the backing of the American people, before initiating any kind of military response. By involving the United Nations in the conflict, the president prepared the way for what would ultimately result in the Gulf War (17 January-28 February 1991). The long shadow cast by Vietnam was also clearly demonstrated by former president Bush's triumphant claim "that the Persian Gulf War victory laid to rest the Vietnam Syndrome, the fear of military entanglement inspired in U.S. policymakers and the public by the experience of the Vietnam War".[31] Later conflicts and a later president demonstrated how wrong the president was. How else, for example, can U.S. strategy in Bosnia in 1995 and in Yugoslavia and Kosovo in April and May 1999 be explained? One of the lasting effects of the Vietnam War is that whenever the question arises whether U.S. troops should be committed in foreign conflicts, the specter of another Vietnam automatically raises its head. In the fall of 1995, for example, an editorial in *USA Today*, called "We have heard this before" had as its opening sentence, "Supporters of the Bosnia peacekeeping mission assure an uneasy public that there will be no repetition of the debacles in Vietnam, Lebanon and Somalia." U.S. post-Vietnam strategy is characterized by caution and a heavy reliance on cruise missiles and other guided weapons systems, so as not to risk American lives. Many of the frustrations

connected with the war which has rightly been called the Forever War, have converged on president Clinton. From the day he sought the political limelight as a presidential candidate, his history as a Vietnam draft dodger has haunted him. To illustrate the point I will cite a letter to the editor of *USA Today*:

> As president Clinton sends troops to Bosnia, he should finally take steps to end the pain felt by soldiers and their families caused by the contrast between his words and his actions in treating people who have had military service. He should fight for and win a congressional vote supporting the use of troops in Bosnia. The price of the lesson on honesty with Congress is written on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C.
>
> *The president also should restore vice-president Al Gore to the role promised when Gore became his running mate. As a veteran, Gore dampened the issue of Clinton's draft dodging. Gore should be given more power over appointments and military and veterans matters* [my emphasis].
>
> I chaired the group that built the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington. We thought our work would end the distrust and needless pain felt by military families. It hasn't.
>
> John Wheeler
> Washington, D.C.[32]

However, it is in the regional press in particular that the effect of the Vietnam War on the lives of ordinary people has been the subject of ongoing attention. In September 1995, for instance, the *Birmingham Post-Herald* ran an article with the headline, "Man killed in I-55 chase suffered Vietnam terrors." A following article described the tragic fate of a Vietnam veteran, who suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and had missed an appointment with the psychiatrist who treated him. After erratic behavior on the road in the Memphis area he tried to elude the police on a race across the Mississippi river into Arkansas, traveling at a hundred miles per hour and forcing other motorists off the road. Police officers shot at the tires of the car to disable it. As a result, the veteran was killed when the car crashed in a canal. His family said that "he probably thought he was fleeing Vietcong". A family friend commented that "when he heard the helicopter humming and cars flashing their lights, he went back to his combat days".[33]

That America cannot forget the Vietnam War even if it wants to, is proved once more by the publication of the memoirs of Robert S. McNamara, *In Retrospect: The Tragedy and Lessons of Vietnam*, in 1995, twenty-two years after America's withdrawal from the war.[34] The

publication of McNamara's book resulted in a great many negative comments. In July 1995, *Harper's Magazine*, for example, published the transcript of an April 25 exchange at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government between Robert McNamara and Maureen Dunn, the widow of a Vietnam veteran. Mrs. Dunn's husband served as a Navy pilot in Vietnam and was shot down over Chinese territorial waters in February 1968. Although U.S. intelligence indicated Dunn survived the attack, no rescue attempt was made, largely because of the government's fear of drawing China into the war. Mrs. Dunn first reiterated the facts and then asked if McNamara remembered what was known at the time as "the China incident".

ROBERT MCNAMARA: No, I'm sorry.
[MAUREEN DUNN]: A pilot was shot down over Hainan Island. Do you remember that incident?
MCNAMARA: I'm sorry, I don't.
DUNN: Okay, well, the thing is, his beeper was heard when he was first shot down [indicating that he was still alive], and then six and a half hours later it was heard for twenty to seventy minutes. And you people sat there in that room for forty-five minutes, never using his name: he was always "the China Incident". He was twenty-five years old. So you never had a face to see. Or to know that he had a twenty-five-year-old wife and a baby, a one-year-old baby.
But I'm that guy's wife. And on page six of the classified document that I received in 1992 [an account of the meeting Dunn obtained through the Freedom of Information Act], you said, "No rescue attempt should be made. Don't go after him. It is not worth it." And all these years, Mr. McNamara, I have wanted someone who was at that meeting to say to me, "I am sorry." And I would like you to say that to me in front of all these people. "I am sorry." Please. I just want you to say, "I am sorry."
MCNAMARA: I have no recollection of the meeting, and I can't believe I -
DUNN: Well, it is right here.
MCNAMARA: I understand what you have, but I have not seen it and I would like to see it.
DUNN: It is right here.
MCNAMARA: But let me just say this: if I said it, I'm not sorry, I'm horrified.
DUNN: I would like you to say to me, "I'm sorry, Maureen."
MCNAMARA: Well, I'll say I'm sorry, but that's not enough. I am absolutely horrified.
DUNN: Well, it is right here, sir, on a twelve-page document.
MCNAMARA: Well, if you'll let me have that, I'll take it home. I'll look at it.

What emerges from the dialogue is the amount of emotion and pain that the Vietnam War continues to foster and at the same time the lack of empathy, of courage perhaps, after so many years on the part of one of the decision makers of those days. The cartoon illustrating an analysis of McNamara's memoir in *The New Yorker*, portraying him weeping crocodile tears, is an apt comment on the above exchange.

In the wake of the publication of *In Retrospect*, "analysts assigned competing motives to McNamara's mea culpa: hypocrisy, remorse, a sense of historical duty . . . but he . . . seemed baffled by the emotions he had stirred".[35] Colonel Harry G. Summers, Jr., author of *On Strategy: A Critical Analysis of the Vietnam War*, believed that McNamara had been dishonest in his "duplicitous, self-serving apologia".[36] However, Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., the former White House aide, taking a different view, asked the question, "Can anyone remember a public official with the courage to confess error and explain where he and his country were wrong?"

Pat. C. Hoy II reviewed McNamara's book in *The Sewanee Review*, a Southern periodical.[37] In his review, entitled "They Died For Nothing, Did They Not," he referred to secretary Dean Rusk, president Johnson, Kennedy's special assistant McGeorge Bundy, deputy-assistant secretary of defense William P. Bundy, and deputy to Mc George Bundy, Walt Rostow, who remained silent on Vietnam, and Nixon and Kissinger, who "puffed themselves with pride over a peace with honor". Hoy had some implied praise for McNamara, who, at long last, had been forthcoming. Expressing as his opinion that *In Retrospect* would remain an important book, not because of McNamara's failures, but "because it reminds us of our own at a given time in history", Hoy went on to answer the question asked in the title of his review: "Those young men did not die for nothing; they died living up to their obligations, preserving the sacred link between the citizenry and its government, the link that ties citizen to soldiering and soldier to state."

The myths surrounding the Vietnam War are part of its enduring legacy. Throughout the war many questioned the assessments and analyses of the U.S. government and the advice of experts in the field. To the present day some continue to believe that there are still American servicemen in Vietnam, though the Clinton administration in 1992 received "a detailed archival record involving the wartime fate of U.S. pilots or soldiers who died in combat or captivity".[38] Another myth is to do with the role of North Vietnam: in *The Wall Street Journal*, (7 November, 1995) Stephen Young, referring to a comment of strategic analyst Hans Morgenthau in 1965 that "the war is first of all a South Vietnamese civil war, aided and abetted by the North Vietnamese government but neither created nor sustained by it," cynically asked, "Well, guess what?"[39]

> Newly released documents from Hanoi's Ministry of Defense throw a new light on the origins of the Vietnam War. They show that American leaders were essentially correct when they accused North Vietnam of directing the insurgency in the South.

Many of the persisting myths about Vietnam may ultimately be unraveled at some future point. But the impact is long-lasting. This could not have been put more clearly and succinctly than Henry Kissinger did with the sober wording of the simple statement "Vietnam is still with us."

In Southern culture the Civil War and the Vietnam War are frequently linked, and in many instances they are mentioned in one breath. One of the most authoritative texts on post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), for example, compared the problems of Civil War and Vietnam War veterans.[40] The connection between the two wars had already been made in one of the first comprehensive accounts of the American involvement in Vietnam, written when the war was still going on. In *The Lost Crusade: America in Vietnam*,(1970) Chester L. Cooper, a member of the 1954 Geneva Conference in Indochina, wrote: "Our experience in Vietnam probably created greater tension in American society than any event since our own Civil War."[41] Colonel Harry G. Summers, Jr., in *On Strategy: A Critical Analysis of the Vietnam War*, (1980) also linked the Civil War and the Vietnam War: ". . . the problem in Vietnam, as in the early days of the Civil War, was not evil leaders or faulty arithmetic as much as it was a lack of strategic thinking".[42]

To examine the legacy of the Vietnam War in the South, I will first discuss post-traumatic stress disorder in war veterans. In *Shook Over Hell: Post-Traumatic Stress, Vietnam, and the Civil War*, Eric T. Dean, Jr., relates the psychological problems of veterans of the Vietnam War to the mental and readjustment problems that tormented veterans of the Civil War. Dean's book breaks with persistent conventional images of the Civil War as a war of dashing generals, stoic soldiers, and legendary campaigns.[43] He contends that the impression has emerged that

> earlier American veterans, including those from the Civil War, may have developed psychological problems due to exposure to combat during their war, but that these problems were "washed away" by the ritual of acceptance and celebration by appreciative civilians that came in the wake of a successful military effort by American armed forces. In the one prior major episode of defeat for Americans in combat - the experience of Confederate troops in the Civil War - historians have suggested that the phenomenon of the Lost Cause, which celebrated and deified the Southern fighting man even in defeat, served to prevent the development of psychological and

social problems.[44]

Dean's research has established the existence of a great number of Civil War veterans who were provided with disability pensions by the U.S. government, because they suffered from serious psychological problems caused by their wartime experience. The complaints troubling Vietnam veterans, are also related to combat experience. The psychological condition of the Vietnam veterans echoes that of the Civil War veterans. Of particular relevance in the light of my present study is Dean's observation that

> for those who would distinguish the Vietnam War from earlier American wars on the grounds that America lost a war for the first time in its history, that there was a lack of public support for the war effort, and that because of this indifference returning troops did not have their psychological distress washed away by exuberant homecoming celebrations as had been the practice in past years, it would be well to take a closer look at the Civil War.[45]

From the vantage point of the Vietnam War, Dean looks back on the Civil War to establish a medical fact that bears on both wars. The psychological problems resulting from battlefield experience in the 1861-1865 war and the war in Southeast Asia were not dissimilar apparently. Dean attempts to expose two myths. The first is the idea of the Vietnam veteran as unique in his suffering. The other does away with the idea that Civil War veterans were not traumatized.[46]

In the Southern view of history there is a connection between the Civil War and the War in Vietnam. This has to do with the Southerner's all-encompassing view of things past, such as described for instance in Clyde Edgarton's *The Floatplane Notebooks*, (1988) in which the past - long past and recent past - is always present. The element of time, as Edgarton handles it in this work of fiction, acquires a quality of "timeless time", in which all the "sad stories" of the region fit in (Owen W. Gilman, Jr., *Vietnam and the Southern Imagination*, p.74). An example that demonstrates the legacy of the war in Southeast Asia in the South: attorneys in a lawsuit resulting from the days of the War in Vietnam, reached back to the Civil War to build their case. In 1996 the *Birmingham Post-Herald* published the story of a small band of South Vietnamese POWs who had remained imprisoned by the Hanoi regime well into the 1980s. Some of them had died in captivity. They were members of Operation 34-Alpha, a secret army of South Vietnamese commandos, who parachuted into the North from the start of the war to gather intelligence for the U.S. Nearly all were killed or captured. It was a

program run by the CIA from 1961 to 1964; later it was run as an Army program, but the deal was the same: "Volunteers were promised that if they were killed their families would get death benefits, and if they were captured the families could collect their pay until the agent returned." Declassified documents have since shown that 485 of the soldiers survived in captivity and 387 were still alive at the time of the Paris Peace Accords of 1973. "But no one asked for their release because American negotiators did not know they existed." In radio broadcasts Hanoi made no secret of the capture of U.S.-Diem spy commandos, but the Pentagon listed them as dead, presumably in an effort to save money. This practice had been revealed as early as 1970. A Marine colonel said in a report: "We reduced the number gradually by declaring so many of them dead each month until we had written them all off." It was not until 1995 that a lawsuit was filed by 281 surviving commandos or family members. "The suit seeks $ 11 million in back pay, just $ 2,000 for each year each agent spent in North Vietnamese prisons, on grounds that the Pentagon falsified their deaths to avoid payment benefits." Some POWs were released as late as 1988. "*But attorneys from the CIA and the Pentagon have reached back to the Civil War to fight the case*" [my emphasis]. In an 1875 precedent, the lawyers argued, a Union spy lost a suit for his unpaid wages "on grounds that parties to a secret contract cannot air their disputes in court". Commenting on the case in an editorial, the *Birmingham Post-Herald* condemned Defence officials ("ice-blooded to the last") handling the case.[47]

Another phenomenon of the Vietnam War that can be traced back to the Civil War is landmines. Developed during the Civil War, they were perfected on European battlefields. Troops in World War I buried artillery shells. By World War II landmines were widely used, mainly against military targets. Bobby Muller of the Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation has said that "it doesn't matter how sophisticated your military is, there is no adequate defense" [against landmines] (Dean, p.181). The irony is that this Civil War invention caused an estimated sixty percent of U.S. injuries and deaths in Vietnam.

From a Southern perspective, military defeat is the most significant link between the War in Vietnam and the Civil War. In "Coming to Terms with Defeat: Post-Vietnam America and the Post-Civil War South", Gaines M. Forster argues that Americans are beginning "to come to terms with defeat in Vietnam", and makes the connection with the Civil War. "A comparison of the South's experience with defeat and America's emerging response to its loss of the War in Vietnam may be helpful."[48] All Americans now contend with the problems that the South also faced: how to interpret defeat, how to reconcile former foes, and how to treat defeated veterans.

Let us consider the fate of the Vietnam veterans from the Southern United States and compare that to what happened to the veterans of that earlier war: the Civil War. The Vietnam veterans quietly returned to their

home communities and went on with their lives. One reason was that the Vietnam War lasted for a very long time (it was not called the Forever War for nothing): individual soldiers went to Vietnam, completed their tour of duty, and, if all went well, returned home. Vietnam was different from earlier wars when troops returned home in large numbers after the war was over. The attitude to returning veterans of the Vietnam War in the South was ambivalent: community members were glad to see one of their own back safe and sound, but they disliked America's role in Vietnam. Therefore there could be no hero's welcome for returning veterans. This contrasts sharply with the welcome that met returning Confederate soldiers in 1865. Throughout the South there were picnics and celebrations to welcome the soldiers home. More important is that "in the 10 to 15 years after the Confederate surrender, Southerners built Confederate cemeteries, erected funereal monuments, and held yearly memorial celebrations in honor of the dead and the veterans". The celebrations developed into an annually recurring ritual and have become an important aspect of Southern culture. For a number of reasons the veterans of the Vietnam War made less of an impact. Important is that only a relatively small percentage of the population fought in Vietnam; this contrasts with the total involvement of the Civil War. Also, the soldiers represented by this small percentage chiefly belonged to the poor and uneducated strata of society. Moreover, there has been no heroic mystique attached to Vietnam veterans, as there had been to the Confederate veterans; instead they were confronted with negative publicity (My Lai).

On a national level, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, which, in the words of the artist who designed it, was not "meant to be cheerful or happy, but to bring out in people the realization of loss and a cathartic healing process", has been very important. The impact of the monument on the national psyche has been considerable, with millions flocking to Washington, D.C. to see it. Its dedication (1982) set in motion a degree of acceptance of the Vietnam veterans. This prepared the way for Hollywood movies that portrayed the veteran as a heroic figure: *Rambo: First Blood Part II* (1985), or that in graphic detail showed the full horror of the war that the veterans had experienced: *Platoon*, (1986). Vietnam veterans saw the latter film as a recognition of what they had done, while former protesters said it backed up their own anti-war arguments of twenty years earlier (Robert O'Connor in *The Guardian*, 8 December 1988). Perhaps the clearest signal to date of the national determination to see its veterans of the Vietnam War on a level with the veterans of America's other Foreign Wars, occurred "in the shadows of the Gulf War parades".[49] The nation was surprised by

> tens of thousands of middle-aged warriors - some balding and overweight, wearing flak jackets and faded military green, walking

> down the streets of America, or rolling down them in wheelchairs, with smiles on their faces. They had pinned their old medals on again. Vietnam vets were finally getting their due, their parades, delayed by fifteen or twenty or twenty-five years of guilt, angst, and anger over what had taken place in Indochina and in the United States.[50]

Educated by a great number of powerful Vietnam War movies, the country as a whole seized the opportunity of victory in the Gulf to finally extend a belated welcome home to the Vietnam War veterans.

Apart from *Platoon*, and *Rambo: First Blood Part II*, referred to above, the following releases all had an impact: *The Deerhunter* (1978), depicting the North Vietnamese and the Vietcong as sadistic torturers, *Apocalypse Now* (1979), a tailoring of Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, and generally considered a flawed masterpiece, showing a realistic helicopter attack sequence, but also containing the surrealistic scene where an American officer orders one of his men to surf in the middle of an attack, saying, "Charlie [the Vietcong] don't surf", and *Full Metal Jacket* (1987) which portrays Hue during the Tet offensive. Owen W. Gilman, Jr., in *Vietnam and the Southern Imagination* (p.193), points out that the movie, based on Gustav Hasford's *The Short-Timers* (New York, 1979), stopped short of the action at the end of the novel, because, Gilman argues, the image of one good American soldier shooting another good American in order to save his own life would not be acceptable to the movie-going public, even though the scene speaks violently to the kind of horror that was found in Vietnam.

There were other movies that deeply impressed America: *Hamburger Hill* (1987), for example, the realistic account of the battle for Hill 937 or Ap Bia Mountain, commonly referred to as Hamburger Hill, that took place in May 1969. The film also shows the meaninglessness of the Vietnam War: Hill 937 was abandoned almost as soon as it had been taken. Further examples were *Gardens of Stone* (1987), focusing on the return to society (Kutler, p.68), and *In Country* (1988) , portraying a dead Vietnam veteran's daughter's odyssey into the past (Gilman, p.50). *Jacknife* (1989), features a Vietnam veteran in Connecticut, trying to regain contact with another veteran, suffering from PTSD. *Born on the Fourth of July* (1989), may be mentioned as a final example here. It shows the horror of the War in Vietnam and its aftermath by focusing on a paralyzed marine who becomes an anti-war activist.

"The South's adjustment to defeat . . . rested not only in its memorialization of its soldiers, but in its interpretation of the war and its reconciliation with the North."[51] Although the causes of the Civil War have remained a controversial subject, the North adopted the Southern attitude to the veterans at an early stage, and a "shared, heroic interpretation of the war developed".[52] It was felt that the veterans had

not died in vain and that their death had "purpose and meaning".[53]

When the Civil War was over in 1865, white Southerners did not think that defeat signified that they had fought the war for the wrong cause. On the contrary, it was felt that "they had fought the war over valid constitutional principles and therefore had acted morally and legally".[54] The Confederate soldiers had fought bravely and heroically. After the war, despite its defeat, the former Confederacy was filled with a sense of pride.

There have been various interpretations of the defeat of the Southern Army. Many analysts have pointed out that the Confederate forces were heavily outnumbered by the North. The defeat of the South has also been seen as a case of divine intervention. In this view God "planned to use them [Southerners] for some greater purpose", which was seen as an answer to the trauma of defeat.[55]

In learning to come to terms with defeat, post-Vietnam America owes much to president Ronald Reagan. In 1980 he said that Americans dishonored the memory of 50,000 young Americans who died in Vietnam "when we give way to feelings of guilt as if we were doing something shameful". He argued that it was time that "we recognize that ours was, in truth, a noble cause".[56] President Reagan thus dealt with defeat in a way not dissimilar to the way defeat in the Civil War had been interpreted in the Post-Civil War South.

The Civil War, then, has frequently functioned as a point of reference for the Vietnam War: "The Vietnam War was not only the longest but also the most divisive conflict involving Americans since the American Civil War."[57] The War in Vietnam caused a great many controversies, affected the nation profoundly, and divided families and friends. The Civil War had similar dramatic effects.

About recent Southern literature, Owen W. Gilman, Jr., has written that it is preoccupied with parallels that emerge from the Vietnam experience and their own region's tragic past. His *Vietnam and the Southern Imagination* (1992) shows the extent to which, in many Southern writers, and in the Southern imagination in general, Vietnam was "prefigured in the history of the South".[58] Ruth D. Weston takes the case of Barry Hannah, who

> does not depict Vietnam as a unique experience, as does Philip Caputo, who calls it "the only . . . [war] we have ever lost". . . . Rather, in Hannah's fiction, Vietnam is presented in the context of the history of the South and its lost cause: as a modern manifestation of Southern traditions of violence, honor, and dishonor . . . . To Hannah's characters it is one of the two "unfinished" wars, in the sense of unresolved issues that continue to exert force over their lives.[59]

Hannah is a Southerner by birth, who has continued to live there. Unlike many authors of Vietnam War fiction, he is not a veteran himself, but, as Weston has pointed out, he "bears witness to the fact that he is of the Vietnam generation".[60] As he grew up, Hannah was never far away from Civil War battle fields and cemeteries. In his postmodern fiction the whole history of the Southern region, including emphatically the Civil War and the Vietnam War, are rolled into one against the backdrop of the Southern landscape and culture. Weston has aptly called the world of Hannah's fiction "an intellectual landscape" ; she argues that in his formative years, Barry Hannah was "surrounded by memorials of the South's honored dead".[61] He also remembered the years of the Vietnam War as the time when "you woke up every day with that war on your TV. . . You were watching 'The Three Stooges' or whatever, and the next thing on was bloody corpses and body counts [and] the copters always."[62]

A number of Barry Hannah's war stories picture a surrealistic world, where the Vietnam War and the Civil War are fused. Indeed, much of Hannah's war fiction, far from telling a realistic story, has all the elements that constitute the Southerner's cultural heritage. "Midnight and I'm Not Famous Yet" is a Vietnam story that may demonstrate this.[63] Its main characters are two soldiers from Mississippi, from a town "north of Vicksburg" (p.105). Vicksburg is a loaded symbol which introduces memories of the Civil War into this story about the Vietnam War. The soldiers, who were at school together, meet in Vietnam by chance. Vietnam has no meaning for them: "Why're you in Nam, anyway?" (p.106). They feel out of place: "There has not been much to shoot. Some smoking villages. A fire in a bamboo forest. I'd like to see a face" (p.107). This is immediately followed by the question "You got any pictures of Vicksburg?" Vicksburg, in contrast to Vietnam, carries meaning for the two soldiers from Mississippi. The importance of the pictures is emphasized by repeated references to them. "I wanted to see the pictures from Vicksburg" (p.107). This is immediately followed in the story by a brief remark which indicates that the two soldiers are about to take off for a bombing mission over North Vietnam: "It was nice to have Tubby alongside . . . . He was hometown, such as he was . . . . Before we flew out north, he showed me what he had" (p.107). Hannah's double meaning is unmistakable. They will fly a mission to the north, meaning North Vietnam, but at the same time the references to Vicksburg and the pictures, identify them firmly with the South of the Civil War. Therefore, in Hannah's surrealistic fiction, the announcement that they will fly out north, refers to the Civil War just as well.

The first person narrator gives a detailed description of the pictures from Vicksburg. Together they paint a grotesque picture of Southern culture: "a cute little negro on roller skates"; an old woman on a porch; "a little boy sleeping in a speedboat with the river in the background"; "a blurred picture of his [the pilot's] wife naked. . ."(p.107). The last picture

is one of John Whitelaw, "our only celebrity since the Civil War", about to crack a golf ball (p.107). The comment, "Tubby had taken it in a striking gray-and-white-grain", links the modern Southern hero with the uniforms of the Confederacy and its heroes.

In a later fragment the two pilots parachute to safety among Vietnamese farmers, who expect a big NVA Army in the area, commanded by general Li Dap, who "knows Robert Lee and the strategy of Jeb Stuart, whose daring circles around an immense army captured his mind . . . . Li Dap wants to be Jeb Stuart" (p.110). The men from Mississippi capture the general, who claims their side will win the war: "Of course, It is our country. . . It is relative to your war in the nineteenth century . . . . The South had slavery . . . . The North must purge it so that it is a healthy region of our country" (p.113).

At the end of the day when the NVA general is captured, at about midnight, "there was a fine Southern moon lighting up the field."(p.115) In the final episode Hannah has the first person narrator watch the John Whitelaw vs. Whitney Maxwell play-off. As we have seen above, the modern Southern hero plays golf but is put within the framework of the Civil War. The association of sport and war is enhanced by such a phrase as, "When they hit the ball, the sound traveled like a rifle snap out over the bluffs." (p.117)

Appropriately, John Whitelaw, who represents the Southern cause, loses. Commenting on the "despondency of the home crowd", Hannah, with fine irony, shows, by implication, that the difference between the loss of the modern Southern sports hero and the Confederate hero, traditionally general Lee, is one of life and death:

> Fools! Fools! I thought. Love it. Love the loss as well as the gain. Go home and dig it. Nobody was killed. We saw victory and defeat, and they were both wonderful (p.118).[64]

Much of Barry Hannah's fiction related to war, (*Airships, Boomerang, Ray, The Tennis Handsome*) shifts backwards and forwards between the real and the surreal, in which the Vietnam War and the Civil War fuse. Weston argues that coherence in Hannah's work "is based on the play of mind and memory instead of on the development of plot and character", which brings it in line with oral history.[65] In the present study, oral history is employed to focus on war and memory to determine the extent of the impact that the Vietnam War and the Civil War had in the South.

In *Vietnam and the Southern Imagination*, Gilman shows how a number of Southern writers have linked the war in Southeast Asia with Southern history.[66] He argues that the "southern propensity for carrying the past into the present" was first accomplished by Allen Tate with his "Ode to the Confederate Dead", which contains the lines taken to be the

heart of the matter for Tate and all Southern writers: "What shall we say who have knowledge/ Carried to the heart?"[67] Applied to the Vietnam War, among such Southern writers are James Webb, *Fields of Fire* (1978), and *Something to Die For* (1991); Bobbie Ann Mason, *In Country* (1985); Jayne Anne Phillips, *Machine Dreams* (1984); Larry Brown, *Dirty Work* (1989); Winston Groom, *Forrest Gump* (1986); and, as we have seen, Barry Hannah. All these Southern writers, Gilman continues, have in common that their work reveals a sense of continuity; there is a constant awareness of the presence of the past in the present.

> The southern writer typically does not approach Vietnam as an anomaly - a weird mutation on the otherwise spotlessly good American record in war. The southerner knows better. He or she knows that Vietnam is part of deeper time and that dispiriting losses like the Vietnam War have at least one prior analogue already lodged in the nation's past . . .The southerner's sense of time extends backwards, far beyond Vietnam.[68]

In the Vietnam War stories of Barry Hannah the relation between the war in Southeast Asia and the Confederate past is dramatized. James Webb's *Fields of Fire* achieves the same effect. Like the former Marine captain Webb, its main character, lt. Hodges, is a descendant of warriors and volunteers for service in Vietnam. He is the "last of the American Samurai". His name, just as in the case of Forrest Gump in the eponymous novel (Nathan Bedford Forrest was a brilliant cavalry commander in the Confederate Army), at once establishes the link with the Civil War. He leaves for Southeast Asia "with a sense of obligation to his ancestors".[69] He feels it is his duty to fight, but "not for Vietnam. For honor (and a whisper saying, 'for the South')."[70]

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial plays a central part in *In Country*, the novel by Bobbie Ann Mason that has been celebrated as "a paean to remembrance".[71] The V-shaped wall of polished black granite bears the names of more than 58,000 Americans who died in the war. I agree with Gilman that "the wall and the cathartic value of remembrance are crucial to Bobbie Ann Mason's *In Country*."[72] Interestingly, W.D. Ehrhart, one of the major soldier-poets of the Vietnam War, read the manuscript of *In Country* at the request of the author ("Who's Responsible": a review of Bobbie Ann Mason's *In Country*, originally given as a talk to the Freshman Forum at La Salle University, Philadelphia, PA, 15 October, 1991, as part of The Sixties Project, sponsored by Viet Nam Generation Inc. and the University of Virginia at Charlottesville). An element that bothered Ehrhart was the ending of the novel: the scene at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Fortunately, Bobbie Ann Mason left this part intact, despite Ehrhart's strong advice to find another venue for her conclusion.

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Much of Barry Hannah's fiction related to war, (*Airships, Boomerang, Ray, The Tennis Handsome*) shifts backwards and forwards between the real and the surreal, in which the Vietnam War and the Civil War fuse. Weston argues that coherence in Hannah's work "is based on the play of mind and memory instead of on the development of plot and character", which brings it in line with oral history.[65] In the present study, oral history is employed to focus on war and memory to determine the extent of the impact that the Vietnam War and the Civil War had in the South.

In *Vietnam and the Southern Imagination*, Gilman shows how a number of Southern writers have linked the war in Southeast Asia with Southern history.[66] He argues that the "southern propensity for carrying the past into the present" was first accomplished by Allen Tate with his "Ode to the Confederate Dead", which contains the lines taken to be the

heart of the matter for Tate and all Southern writers: "What shall we say who have knowledge/ Carried to the heart?"[67] Applied to the Vietnam War, among such Southern writers are James Webb, *Fields of Fire* (1978), and *Something to Die For* (1991); Bobbie Ann Mason, *In Country* (1985); Jayne Anne Phillips, *Machine Dreams* (1984); Larry Brown, *Dirty Work* (1989); Winston Groom, *Forrest Gump* (1986); and, as we have seen, Barry Hannah. All these Southern writers, Gilman continues, have in common that their work reveals a sense of continuity; there is a constant awareness of the presence of the past in the present.

> The southern writer typically does not approach Vietnam as an anomaly - a weird mutation on the otherwise spotlessly good American record in war. The southerner knows better. He or she knows that Vietnam is part of deeper time and that dispiriting losses like the Vietnam War have at least one prior analogue already lodged in the nation's past . . .The southerner's sense of time extends backwards, far beyond Vietnam.[68]

In the Vietnam War stories of Barry Hannah the relation between the war in Southeast Asia and the Confederate past is dramatized. James Webb's *Fields of Fire* achieves the same effect. Like the former Marine captain Webb, its main character, lt. Hodges, is a descendant of warriors and volunteers for service in Vietnam. He is the "last of the American Samurai". His name, just as in the case of Forrest Gump in the eponymous novel (Nathan Bedford Forrest was a brilliant cavalry commander in the Confederate Army), at once establishes the link with the Civil War. He leaves for Southeast Asia "with a sense of obligation to his ancestors".[69] He feels it is his duty to fight, but "not for Vietnam. For honor (and a whisper saying, 'for the South')."[70]

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial plays a central part in *In Country*, the novel by Bobbie Ann Mason that has been celebrated as "a paean to remembrance".[71] The V-shaped wall of polished black granite bears the names of more than 58,000 Americans who died in the war. I agree with Gilman that "the wall and the cathartic value of remembrance are crucial to Bobbie Ann Mason's *In Country*."[72] Interestingly, W.D. Ehrhart, one of the major soldier-poets of the Vietnam War, read the manuscript of *In Country* at the request of the author ("Who's Responsible": a review of Bobbie Ann Mason's *In Country*, originally given as a talk to the Freshman Forum at La Salle University, Philadelphia, PA, 15 October, 1991, as part of The Sixties Project, sponsored by Viet Nam Generation Inc. and the University of Virginia at Charlottesville). An element that bothered Ehrhart was the ending of the novel: the scene at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Fortunately, Bobbie Ann Mason left this part intact, despite Ehrhart's strong advice to find another venue for her conclusion.

Ehrhart argues that the Wall prevents people from asking such basic questions as: Why did all those people die? Who offered them up for slaughter? What was accomplished for the price of so much blood? How was it permitted to go on for so long? Where are the names of the three million dead of Indochina? But Ehrhart misses the point. Bobbie Ann Mason looks at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial from a Southern perspective: it is a place of remembrance tied in with family history as it was affected by the larger history of the Vietnam War. Ehrhart, who hails from Pennsylvania, shows himself a non-Southern writer.

Gilman rightly argues that in order to understand the novel, in particular its conclusion, it is crucial to realize the importance of history to a Southerner. *In Country* describes how Samantha, the daughter of a soldier killed in Vietnam, accompanied by close relatives, makes the journey to the nation's capital to find the name of her father on the national monument. In this way the Vietnam Veterans Memorial becomes "a mechanism for opening the past to the present". (Gilman, p.47) Earlier in the novel, it is her father's diary that allows Samantha to discover something of the real Vietnam. It is partly through the diary that history becomes accessible. The Civil War past is briefly made visible in the scene where Sam settles down in a mall to read the diary and someone dressed in a Confederate-flag T-shirt tries to talk to her. (p.201) *In Country* thus incorporates the distant past of the Civil War and the recent past of the War in Vietnam into the larger entity of the history of the region and its culture.

To Southerners the Vietnam Veterans Memorial has a meaning that transcends its primary meaning of honoring and remembering the names of the nation's fallen in Vietnam, which is what it is to visitors from other regions of the United States, and sometimes it is not even that to non-Southerners: "What are all these names anyway?"(p.240). Southerners grow up with Civil War cemeteries almost in their backyards. Nearly all the Civil War battlefields, monuments, and cemeteries, are in the South. There is a natural connection between the Vietnam monument and the Civil War cemeteries in the South, which, likewise continue to attract a great many visitors. Field trips to these Civil War sites are part of the regular program in many Southern schools. In Brownsville, Tennessee, for example, teachers regularly take their classes to Shiloh. Southerners are surrounded by the images that are at the heart of this controversial and historically-conscious culture. In Mason's novel it is obvious that "the past is not so much understood as felt".[73]

A sense of history is one of the dominant themes also in Larry Brown's *Dirty Work*. This novel (1989) encompasses the cultural histories of the two protagonists, one black, one white, but both from the South. The Vietnam War and the Civil War are juxtaposed in the novel when Braiden, the black character, calls to mind "a Jimmy Stewart Civil War movie" he had watched together with his mother on the eve of his departure for Vietnam.[74] Another such connection is made when Braiden

tells his white companion about the books from the hospital library. He had asked for "something about the Civil War".[75] They had then asked this black soldier, who has been severely wounded in Vietnam, if he wanted a book about the black soldiers in the Civil War.

The two severely wounded Vietnam veterans lying side by side in the VA hospital, tell each other in alternating chapter-long monologues, their life histories, including the battle scenes in Southeast Asia that explain why they are in the hospital. The two wounded veterans constitute a microcosm of Southern culture. Braiden, for example, tells his companion, "Man you know I had a granma whose daddy was a slave .... He was freed and fought at Shiloh, and run at Vicksburg when he seen it was gone, that they was beat."[76] This is followed almost immediately by a lament for all the lives wasted in the Vietnam War. "Fifty-eight thousand of ours we lost." In this way the whole of Southern history, from its early beginning, from the times of slavery through the Vietnam War era, is tied in with the history of one family. The juxtaposition of the Confederate past and the Vietnam present in one and the same novel follows a pattern characteristic of Southern writers. The sense of continuity that speaks from the pages of the work of Southern writers implies that the burden of the past, both distant and recent, will probably carry over into the future.

2. *BROWNSVILLE, HAYWOOD COUNTY, TENNESSEE, AND ITS NEWSPAPER*

Setting the Scene

In more senses than one, Tennessee divides into three parts.[77] Geographically, the long rectangular state is mountainous in the east, while middle Tennessee is characterized by foothills. The Mississippi river is the natural border of the low plain of west Tennessee. For many years highway signs read: "Welcome to the Three Great States of Tennessee."[78] The geographical differences within the state are reflected on a historical and political level. Historically, the natural boundaries explain the settlement pattern from the eastern highlands to the Mississippi lowlands.

Situated in the low plain of West Tennessee, on the bank of the Hatchie River, Brownsville is a blend of the old South and the new.[79] Haywood County is in the center of one of the richest agricultural areas of the South.[80] The distance to Brownsville, situated in the center of the county, naturally led to the development of a considerable number of communities. These were each like smaller towns themselves, with blacksmith shops, grist mills, cotton gins, general stores, and even their own doctors. These communities were usually built near churches and schools which had already been established.[81]

Haywood County is situated on the west Tennessee plateau which slopes gently toward the Mississippi river. The South Forked Deer and Hatchie rivers flow into the mighty Mississippi, thus facilitating travel by flatboats and small crafts.[82] Before 1835 Haywood County covered an area of approximately 575 square miles. In 1835, and again in 1870 the county's area was slightly reduced. From the first settler in the county in 1821 the population increased to 20,318 in 1996. The Treaty of 1818 by which the Chickasaws lost their interest in the land of Tennessee, was instrumental in the settlement of Haywood County. It triggered the great migration, particularly from North Carolina, which followed. But settlers also came from South Carolina and Virginia, the journey from North Carolina to West Tennessee taking about a month. The new settlers came floating down the rivers, in covered wagons, on horseback, or walking, frequently following the trails or traces snaked out by the Indians years before.

At the time when the first settlers came to West Tennessee (1821-1826), the difference with other frontier communities was that the settlers who moved to Haywood County were "educated, godly people", who were already involved in organized religion.[83] Most of them were Baptists and Methodists, although other denominations were represented as well.

Cotton first made its appearance in Haywood County in 1828. The land was fertile and its proximity to the Mississippi enabled the cotton to be transported to Memphis by riverboat. Cotton has remained the most important agricultural source of income in the county to the present day.

In 1846 the first trains appeared; there were several narrow gauge railroads running in different directions out of Brownsville. The trains carried freight as well as passengers. River traffic was effectively ousted by the new, faster railroads by 1856. In 1968, however, the L&N (the Louisville and Nashville) ceased to operate passenger trains through Brownsville and the Depot was demolished.

The folklore of the first settlers reveals their European - predominantly British - past.[84] Each spring they would choose a May Queen, for example. Their folkways included logrolling, house raisings, quilting parties, corn huskings, fish frys, shooting matches, hunting and barbecues.[85]

Brownsville was named for general Jacob Jennings Brown of Pennsylvania, a hero of the War of 1821; it was designated the County Seat by the legislature in 1823-1824.

Politically, the different parts of Tennessee had divergent allegiances in the Civil War; the east was for the Union, while the middle and the west, with their plantations, supported the Confederacy. Initially, most Tennesseans were reluctant to break away from the Union. In February 1861, fifty-four percent of the state's voters were against sending delegates to a secession convention. The turning point, however, was the firing on Fort Sumter in April, followed by Lincoln's call for 75,000 volunteers to coerce the seceded states back into line.[86] This provoked a major shift in Middle Tennessee: from fifty-one percent against secession in February to eighty-eight percent in favor in June. Tennessee became the last state to leave the Union.

Although West Tennessee was Confederate, still there were about sixty men in Haywood County who, in 1863, formed a company to serve with the Union Army. No major battles were fought in the county, but there were several skirmishes. On 29 July 1862 four soldiers were killed and six wounded, distributed evenly over the Blue and the Gray. The war seriously affected the lives of the people of Haywood County and the economy. Food became a scarce commodity; slaves ran off, yet some returned, presumably after hostilities had ended; Northern, white, bands roamed the county. Some stores were burned and most businesses were closed.[87] After the Civil War, white Southerners were obliged to sign a Pledge of Allegiance to the United States in order to be able to vote. The state of Tennessee was readmitted to the Union in 1866.

The era of Reconstruction (1865-1877) made life difficult for white Southerners, who were faced with the presence of "organizations such as the Freedman's Bureau, the American Missionary Association, the northern Protestant denominations, the Republican party, and the Union League".[88] The South was divided into five military districts under the Reconstruction Act of 1867, and Union soldiers enforced government decisions. In the middle of the period of Reconstruction, hard times hit West Tennessee, when yellow fever appeared in the area. It also came to Haywood County. When it returned "in epidemic proportions" five years

later, many people left Brownsville for the country (*History of Haywood County, Tennessee, 1989*, p.236).[89] Everything that could be used as a mode of transportation was used. "Nightfall did not check the exodus." All night long the cracking of whips, the rumble of wagons emphasized the desperate rush to escape the fearful epidemic (*Heart of the Tennessee Delta: A Historical Guidebook to Haywood County*).[90] Not everybody left, however. People mistakenly believed that blacks were immune from yellow fever.[91] Many of them died, as did some of the whites who had decided to stay. It was not until winter made itself felt in November that people began to flock back to town. It is reported that approximately 375 people died as a result of the epidemic.

Despite the short duration of the American involvement in World War I, some twenty young men from Haywood County and Brownsville lost their lives, or were disabled. During World War II, fifty-one men from Brownsville and Haywood County were killed (*Brownsville States-Graphic*, July 1997). For the state of Tennessee the total numbers are four thousand and seven thousand respectively (*Tennessee Blue Book 1995-1996*, pp.399, 404). In the Korean War, three local servicemen lost their lives (*Brownsville States-Graphic*, July 1997). For the entire state the total number of war dead was eight hundred and forty-three. The War in Vietnam took the lives of one thousand, two hundred and ninety-two servicemen (*Tennessee Blue Book*, p.416). The war monument in Brownsville displays the names of eighteen local men who died in Vietnam. The relatively heavy losses, locally as well as statewide, tie in with the high representation of Southerners in the armed forces (Cf. *List of Casualties Incurred by U.S. Military Personnel In Connection With The Conflict in Vietnam, by Home State of Record: Deaths From 1 January 1961 Thru 31 March 1973*, Directorate For Information Office, Assistant Secretary of Defense, April 25, 1973). A comparison of Vietnam War casualties and the population by state, as established in the 1970 census, shows that the Southern region was hit harder than the rest of the U.S. by the War in Vietnam. The pertaining statistics for some Southern states are as follows: Alabama: Vietnam War casualties 1,207; population 3,444,165; Georgia: Vietnam War casualties 1,582 ; population 4,589,575; Louisiana: Vietnam War casualties 882; population 3, 641, 306; Mississippi: Vietnam War casulaties 637; population 2,216,912. These figures compare to the following statistics for some non-Southern states: California: Vietnam War casualties 5,573; population 19,953,134; Connecticut: Vietnam War casualties 611; population 3,031,709; New York: Vietnam War casualties 4,121; population 18,236,967 (Center for Electronic Records - NWME -, The National Archives at College Park, 8601 Adelphi Road, College Park, Maryland 20740-6001; www.nara.gov/nara/electronic/vnstat.html#state; www.census.gov/population/cencounts/(state)90090.txt).

There has always been a high representation of Southerners in the armed services. Alexis de Tocqueville noted that Southerners liked

hunting and war. The martial spirit of the South was noticeable in the state of Tennessee even before that date. In 1780 colonel John Sevier called for "100 good men", and 200 answered. Stories like this are remembered and are a source of pride to the present day, and help to explain why Tennessee is called the volunteer state. During the War of 1812 and the Mexican War, enthusiasm for the war in the South contrasted with the lack of it in the North. During World War II, British author D.W. Brogan, in explaining to his countrymen their wartime American allies claimed that "in the South, the heroes were nearly all soldiers".[92] At the start of the Korean War, forty-six percent of the American military elite still had Southern affiliations, although the population of the South at the time was only twenty-seven percent of the country's total. When the U.S. armed forces started fighting in Vietnam in earnest, the top army and air force commanders were Southerners, and later anti-war activism was much less on white Southern campuses than on their non-Southern counterparts.[93] Similarly, on black campuses, few and far between in the South anyway, protests were less vociferous than in other regions.

The question why the South is so well represented in the armed forces may be answered, first, by pointing to the agrarian nature of the South, which, traditionally, has harbored "elements of romanticism, fostered by a concern for the past, a reverence for heroes, and an allegiance to a code that emphasized honor".[94] Secondly, regardless of the outcome of the Civil War, the Southern military made a great impact on the imagination of white Southerners during the Confederacy. The Confederate generals, Robert E. Lee first and foremost, were the true cultural heroes of the period in the South.[95]

In *The Professional Soldier: A Social and Political Portrait* (1964. Reprinted, New York, 1971), Morris Janowitz, an authoritative sociologist, shows a continuing military tradition in the South. He has found that "officers with Southern affiliations of birth, schooling, or marriage, during the 1950-1971 period researched, continued to be represented disproportionately in America's military".[96] Janowitz also points out that, during the War in Vietnam, ROTC continued to attract large numbers of students on Southern campuses, and that the Virginia Military Institute and South Carolina's Citadel continued to do well. Respect for the military and an almost lifelong participation in it comes natural to both whites and blacks in Southern communities and as the interviews will show, Brownsville is no exception.

Recently Brownsville has moved with the times, along with other Southern towns in what is now often referred to as the Sunbelt. The *Brownsville States-Graphic* provides a typical example of the new prose that is a mixture of community pride and self-advertising. "Isn't it wonderful to live in Brownsville, especially this time of year? If you are an out-of town reader, just picture brilliant red-buds, luxuriant azaleas in pink, red and white, tulips in a rainbow of colors, an abundance of

dogwoods, spiraea sprinkled throughout, and the happy faces of pansies in vivid yellow, pink, red, white, and deep purple smiling at every passerby. Now, you have it, the Heart of the Tennessee Delta in springtime, a lovely sight to see." The town has a City Beautiful, a new bypass has been constructed, a hotel, and fast food restaurants have been built at the I-40 junction, while the city authorities and the Chamber of Commerce make constant efforts to attract new business. The mayor, the county commissioner, and the Chamber of Commerce, have joined forces to build a visitors center in an effort to attract white and black tourists to the area. The center is to provide visitors with information varying from the ante-bellum homes in Brownsville, nearby Reelfoot Lake and its wildlife population, fishing and hunting opportunities in the area, the Tina Turner museum, and the annual blues festival, with its memories of Sleepy John Estes, whose music influenced the legendary Bob Dylan. The Confederate soldier can still be found in the town center.

Southern Newspapers

Many early newspapers in the South assumed names ending in *Gazette*, such as the *South Carolina Gazette* (Charleston, founded in 1732). The designation *Gazette* was used for the first newspapers in Virginia, North Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Kentucky, Tennessee, Mississippi, and Arkansas.[97] In the revolutionary period some Southern newspapers, such as the *South Carolina Gazette*, were firmly behind the patriot cause. Others, however, supported the British. The *Georgia Gazette*, for example, changed its name to *Royal Georgia Gazette* during the British occupation of Savannah.[98] Similar changes occurred in other states in the Old South. During the Civil War, Southern daily newspapers virtually disappeared as a result of a serious lack of ink, newsprint, labor, and military censorship, and only 182 weeklies survived.[99] Yet the Southern country press re-emerged to serve its region as a unifying element.

"To an extent seldom found elsewhere in the world, country newspapers in the post [Civil] War American South reflected an intimacy with their readers and a profound identification with the region's culture."[100] This is an important comment on the *Brownsville States-Graphic*. In the words of Paul Sims (19 January 1962), who wrote the editorials in the 1960s,

> your home town newspaper is a bulletin board which is community wide . . . your newspaper brings you the facts about what is taking place in your community. There are editorials, the only items that contain the opinion of the writers, special columns, news events, on a hometown level, visiting, marriages, the passing of friends and

> loved ones, and other features so personal in their nature that they are not found anywhere except in your home town newspaper.
>
> Most people will agree that the greatest strength in America today lies in having a strong and well informed people and newspapers are playing a major role in bringing this about.
>
> . . . [T]he home town newspaper is the only publication in the world which devotes its total energy to its own community.

The Southern country newspaper identifies with the culture of the region. It publishes all the facts and points of interest relevant to city and county; it prints local news items that do not appear in any other newspaper. Since the end of the Civil War and the days of Reconstruction, however, Southern country newspapers have been faced by the enduring problem of publishing "a balanced community newspaper in a multiracial environment" (Wilson, p.936). The changed race relationship on a national level initiated by legislation in the early 1960s by the Johnson administration, is reflected in the pages of the local *Brownsville States-Graphic* (Cf. Wilson, p.936). A comparison of local newspaper issues of 1959 and 2001 demonstrates that, whereas forty odd years ago blacks were virtually non-existent in the *Brownsville States-Graphic*, today their pictures are printed in the social column, in announcements from the local schools, and their names are mentioned in other reports published in the newspaper. Although news items about local blacks were minimal in the past, certainly in the early 1960s, yet news about local black soldiers related to Vietnam was always published. News about the Vietnam War was widely covered by radio, television, and the national press. Therefore the front page of the *Brownsville States-Graphic* contained articles on the war only as it affected the lives of the local servicemen and their family. In this way the community was kept informed of the men's movements and experiences. All of this justifies my analysis of the *Brownsville States-Graphic*.

The Public Record: The Vietnam Years, Civil Rights, and the Local Newspaper

The Vietnam War Years

Life in the heart of the Tennessee Delta went on very much as usual during the years of the Vietnam War, judging by the newspaper. Even today news about the U.S. beyond the local area takes up only one column consisting of brief items in the major regional newspapers.[101] In order to obtain a clear picture of the local news between 1960 and 1973 I

will examine the front page of the *Brownsville States-Graphic.*

Within Brownsville city limits there were two separate entities, one white, one black, during the 1960s. This could also be perceived in the segregated city and country schools. The gap that existed between the two groups was further made clear and commented on in my interviews with Leon King (black), Earl Rice (black), Christy Smith (white), and others. Its full extent was perhaps best explained by Leon King who argued that during the Vietnam War, blacks would often be unaware that a white soldier had been killed. Yet whites and blacks had lived together peacefully for many years. This leads to the conclusion that, certainly during the Vietnam era, the local community was segregated.

The newspaper reports that dominated the front page during the period had to do with the struggle for civil rights, the Vietnam War, and their interaction. On 23 July 1965, "the shooting war in Viet Nam" and the battle going on "here on our home front in Haywood County", were mentioned in one breath. The problem involved a black youth who had escaped from local police officers. The civil rights issue started locally with the attempt on the part of blacks to be registered to vote and escalated to the stage where black families were evicted and moved to a Tent City. A related issue was the integration of the schools in both city and county. This developed into a long drawn-out battle in the federal court in Memphis and the court of appeals in Cincinnati. It only came to an end when the new, integrated, Haywood High School was constructed in 1970.

During the 1960-1973 period, the front page of the *Brownsville States-Graphic* reflected a profound identification with the white Southern culture of West Tennessee and its people. The paper followed the cotton crop, crucial to area farmers, through the seasons and reported all the important stages in great detail, so that farmers' sons fighting in Southeast Asia were able to follow the life cycle of the main crop in their native county, so to speak. (There is evidence of some soldiers receiving the *Brownsville States-Graphic* in the mail; on one occasion it had been used to wrap up some gifts from home).The community's fascination with its ante-bellum past and the Civil War showed through news reports on the project aimed at planting magnolia trees along the four-mile stretch connecting the city of Brownsville with the new I-40 highway; references to the beautiful ante-bellum homes in Brownsville; fieldtrips by local schools to the site of the battle of Shiloh; the celebration of the Civil War centenary; a reference to January 19 as the birthday of general Lee, and so on.

Civil War

The Civil War centennial was the central political event in 1961. It generated a large number of stories, varying from an account of the experiences of a cavalry company composed of men from Haywood County to a reminder of the Battle of Brownsville, in which only 6 or 8 people were killed. "Speakers Will Honor Lee On His Birthday: County Schools to be Visited in Observance Of 100th War Anniversary" (13 January 1961). The chairman of the Haywood County Centennial Committee for commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the Civil War had said that a group of speakers would visit the schools of the county on January 19, the birthday of general Robert E. Lee, commander-in-chief of the Confederacy. It was announced (3 March 1961) that there was a new book in the library, called *We Whipt 'em Everytime: Diary of a Confederate Soldier*, the diary of Bartlett Yancey Malone, of Co. A, 5th North Carolina Regiment, who fought in most of the battles in Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania. The dust jacket was drawn by Morton Felsenthal of Brownsville. Editor Owen Burgess of the *Brownsville States-Graphic* said (April 14), "During this year when we celebrate the centennial of the Civil War, I think it in order to point out local folks whose relatives were Civil War heroes."

The names of the Confederate soldiers from Haywood County, as indeed the names of all the soldiers of the Union and Confederate Armies, are recorded in *The Official Records of the Union & Confederate Armies* (125 volumes) at the Goodwyn Institute in Memphis. These official records were compiled by the federal government shortly after the Civil War. The Civil War centennial gave rise to the publication of interesting stories like the one about the Haywood Rangers who "did their part in [the] War between [the] States" (May 12):

> Sometime during the early summer of 1861, a calvary company composed of men from Haywood County was organized by captain Robert Haywood of Brownsville, and [this came to be] known as [the]Haywood Rangers.[102] All of its members were skilled horsemen. The company was later designated as Co. D, 7th Tennessee Calvary, C.S.A. In September, 1861, a small skirmish was fought near Mayfield Creek, where a Union unit was camped near Blandville, Ky. Here sergeant Mike McGrath of the Haywood Rangers had his horse shot out from under him. (Notes of a Private, by John M. Hubbard, 1909, member of Co. D, 7th Tennessee Calvary C.S.A.)
>
> Sergeant McGrath was a native of Ireland and enlisted in the Haywood Rangers at the time captain Haywood organized the Company. He served throughout the war in Co. D, 7th Cav. After

> his Civil War service, sergeant McGrath returned to Brownsville where he was engaged in the saloon business.
>
> During the terrible yellow fever scourge of 1878, McGrath rendered what services he could to yellow fever victims. While other citizens were fleeing the town, McGrath and a negro named Bob Hoyle went through town in a mule-drawn wagon every day calling out to bring out those who had died during the night and these they interred in the local cemetery. In 1880 there was a recurrence of the yellow fever and [this time] sergeant McGrath [himself] was stricken and soon died. His fellow comrades of Co. D, 7th Tenn. erected a monument to his memory in the local cemetery and on it inscribed his heroic deeds during the epidemic of 1878.

The Civil War past was also evoked more playfully. When some forty feeder cattlemen from Iowa and Illinois visited Haywood County this was reported in the newspaper with the headline, "Yankee Invasion Pleases Cow Folk" (25 August 1961). In the article the joke was elaborated upon: "These are not the blue clad shooting variety but the dressed-up kind with money in their pockets looking over our calf crop."

On 3 August 1962, Owen Burgess reminded the readers of the *Brownsville States-Graphic* of the Battle of Brownsville, which had been fought in the area during the Civil War. Further information on the battle was printed in the issue of 24 August 1962. "Seems that there is a bend in Hatchie river up this side of Estaunala that is known as Battle Ground Bend. According to Chancellor John Gray, the Federal troops captured one of the Confederate soldiers and took him to a nearby home. While they were eating dinner the Confederates regrouped and took the prisoner from the Yanks." In the official records the battle of Brownsville is listed as a guerrilla raid.

War and Remembrance

The front page of the *Brownsville States-Graphic* announced the time and place of scheduled commemorative activities. On Friday 8 May 1964, for example, a Memorial Day service was announced and its history was emphasized: "Memorial Day services have been held at Trinity cemetery (in the Nut Bush community) since the Civil War, when members met to honor their war dead." Closely connected with the observance of Veterans Day is the sale of red poppy flowers during the preceding Saturday, when elementary school students sell them on the square for the American Legion Auxiliary's annual scholarship and their projects with veterans. This ritual originated in WW I. The poppy flower attained its present symbolic value through the Canadian physician John McCrae's

poem "In Flanders Fields". Today the red paper poppy is used in Britain and America to commemorate the dead soldiers of all past wars.

On Friday, 13 November 1964, the front page of the *Brownsville States-Graphic* had a brief article entitled "Veterans Day Observed Here". It reported in detail the events of Veterans Day on Wednesday, November 11, in the court yard at the monument to "our war dead". It reported extensively on Veterans Day and Memorial Day. In 1972 the only reports on the front page of the local newspaper were about Vietnam veterans: James Bryan Edwards, 22, of Route 2, Whiteville had died in a road accident. He had only just returned from service in Vietnam. Russell Taliaferro, a retired Air Force officer was appointed director of the ambulance authority. (An interview with colonel Taliaferro can be found in a following chapter).

News of the War in Vietnam

When we look at it in retrospect, an originally inconspicuous line stands out on the front page of the *Brownsville States-Graphic* of 29 December 1950. In a review of the events of the past year we find, "February 7 - Western powers recognize pro-French Vietnam". This first reference to Vietnam in the *Brownsville States-Graphic* was a brief statement made during the Korean War. A first indication of the deployment of Haywood County soldiers in the future conflict appeared on 23 February 1961. "Pvt. Robert S. Parks . . . 203, East Main, Brownsville, has been assigned to Company F, 399th Regiment, at Fort Chaffee, Ark. . . . The 399th Regiment is part of the 100th Division, an Army Reserve unit from Kentucky. The 100th was the first Division called to active duty in the current military build-up."

Yet it would not be until 1962 that the local newspaper reported on a local serviceman in connection with Vietnam. The first reference to combat experience in Vietnam was printed by the *Brownsville States-Graphic* on 7 September 1962. The front page had a story about lieutenant William Arthur Rose, who was home on leave after a four-month tour of duty as a helicopter pilot for the U.S. Marine Corps. The Marine helicopter unit flew the troops into battle, with each helicopter carrying 11 to 15 soldiers. Most of the fighting was along the Mekong River, in the Mekong Delta. When asked if helicopter pilots received combat pay, lieutenant Rose smiled and said: "No, it is not a war." But he added that sometimes it was hard to realize that it was not a war, with bullets whistling around. A year later lieutenant Rose was presented the Air Medal with Gold Star. He was cited for his aerial flight operations as a crew chief with Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 362 during combat trooplift missions in support of Vietnam forces against communist guerrilla groups from April to June 1962. He completed more than 40

missions during the period, often exposed to hostile fire at close range. Staff sergeant James W. Shelby of Memphis, who with his family used to live in the Tibbs community, Haywood County, and attended school there, received the Silver Star, (31 July 1964). Sergeant Shelby, while wounded, made four separate trips under heavy fire, to carry four wounded men to safety in the jungle of Vietnam in January.

During the mid-1960s, the years when the Vietnam conflict was steadily escalating, reports mentioning local servicemen leaving for Southeast Asia began to appear with a certain regularity. "Corporal Franklin H. Jones, son of Mrs. Walter Jones, is en route to Vietnam" (5 November 1965). Later, in December 1966, the *Brownsville States-Graphic* reported that a soldier from Brownsville was leaving for Vietnam for his second tour of duty after a three-month leave. Corporal Jimmy Stewart of the U.S. Marine Corps had completed a year in Vietnam in the spring.

When one of the local men, Captain Jack Banks, a career Army officer, returned from Vietnam, the local newspaper published the account of his experiences and his views on the war in general, on the front page. The Army officer had a positive story to tell: there was no shortage of supplies, morale was better than in the United States. Banks also claimed that things were much better than they sounded (in the United States). However, it appears very likely that his attitude had to do with his deployment as an adviser to a Vietnamese ordnance unit, stationed two hundred miles due north of Saigon, in a relatively quiet area.

Soldiers from Haywood County continued to be sent to Vietnam. Pfc. Joseph Welch arrived there February 4 (10 February 1967).[103] Barney R. Garrett, who graduated from Haywood High School in 1965, was injured when struck by fragments from a hand grenade (17 February 1967).

Lieutenant-commander James L. Griffin, 35, was reported missing on 26 May 1967. He had been shot down over North Vietnam. Commander Griffin was flying from the aircraft carrier *Kitty Hawk*. Squadron mates reported seeing two parachutes descending from Griffin's plane, and later Hanoi radio announced that Griffin was one of the captured airmen. Sergeant James Emerson was reported wounded (2 June 1967). The Army report received by his mother, Mrs. Bernice White, stated that he had received wounds in the arm and hand and that he was to receive a Purple Heart for injuries sustained in fighting the Vietcong. Sergeant Emerson had been in Vietnam since November 1966. On 9 June 1967 an article entitled "Young Army Officer Outstanding" reported that captain Larry S. Banks, "now serving in Vietnam" (with the 308th Supply and Service Battalion), was among the Outstanding Young Men of America. Captain Banks was graduated from Vanderbilt University in 1963.

There is no point in listing all the notices about individual soldiers that appeared in the local newspaper during the Vietnam War era.

Therefore I will briefly consider the experiences in Vietnam of the soldiers from Brownsville and Haywood County who did a tour of duty there, and demonstrate, I hope, that the resulting image emerging from this constitutes a broad panorama of America's involvement at close range.

Local soldiers, then, took part in fierce fighting in the Mekong Delta (1967); they were injured while fighting in Cambodia (1970), or flew dangerous re-supply missions in bad weather, as in the case of captain Martinez (1970). Not all local servicemen survived their tour of duty. The first Vietnam War related death was reported on 26 November 1965. Sergeant William A. Ferrell, was killed in action on November 17. Ferrell, a member of the 3rd (Indian head) Division, was killed along with his entire company. Sergeant Ferrell [of Crockett County] was raised in Haywood County, where at one time he lived near the Koko community. On the same front page it was reported that captain Samuel Spencer Sanford visited his family in Brownsville en route to the West Coast from where he would leave for Vietnam to serve with special forces for a year. The December 3 issue of the *Brownsville States-Graphic* was published with a picture of William A. Ferrell and the word KILLED printed over his portrait. Ferrell had been an honor guard at president Johnson's inauguration.

Other local soldiers were killed in Vietnam. They were killed through gun shot wounds suffered in combat operations (sergeant Nathaniel Merriwethers in 1966; pfc. Larry McCoy in 1968); pfc. Paul T. Wittington was fatally wounded while treating a fallen comrade during a battle (1966). Corporal Larry G. Land was killed by a sniper's bullet (1967). Serious accidents also claimed the lives of local servicemen in Vietnam: Willie Coleman was drowned while crossing a river during a patrol (1967), while sergeant James E. Young was killed when an artillery tank exploded (1968). Sometimes there would be no information available on the cause of death, as in the case of pfc. Billy Wright, who was reported "killed in action near Hue" (1968). Corporal Jeffrey Woodrow Norvell died after getting severely wounded in a tank (1968). One casualty that many local people still remember is lt. Norman Lane, an honor graduate of Vanderbilt University in Nashville, who had studied at the university of Aix and attended law school at Vanderbilt. Lt. Lane went to Vietnam as a volunteer; he was killed by shrapnel three months after he had arrived in Vietnam (1968). Danny Overton likewise was killed by shrapnel (1970). The circumstances surrounding the death in Vietnam of crew chief Richard Keith Johnston as a result of a helicopter crash (1970), have remained a mystery.

The *Brownsville States-Graphic* of 17 May 1968 reported two casualties: Tom Boyd, Jr., a helicopter pilot from Corpus Christi, Texas, and nephew of the late Homer Rainey, died in action on Sunday, 12 May 1968. While stationed in Millington in 1966, he had attended First Methodist Church, where he had been active in the affairs of the church. The second death reported in the newspaper that same day was corporal

Tyrone Austin, 23. Corporal Austin was killed while serving with the U.S. Marines. He was a 1963 graduate of Carver High School and attended Tennessee A & I University and Washington University in St. Louis.

In the beginning of 1968 the war was escalating and the number of casualties involving Haywood County soldiers was increasing accordingly.

Memorial services honoring soldiers of six wars were planned at the Stanton cemetery for Sunday June 2 (May 31, 1968). The parents of Billy Wright, who had been killed in Vietnam on February 1, were presented with two awards: the Purple Heart and Bronze Star Medal with "V" device. Owen Burgess added a personal note to the awards ceremony for Billy Wright in his editorial column which I will quote in full here, because it sheds some light on feelings about the Vietnam War in Haywood County at the time:

> Old memories flooded back, almost to tears when the colonel read the orders of commendation, . . . "his display of personal bravery and devotion to duty". We refer, of course, to the awards ceremony when Pvt. Billy L. Wright was honored posthumously at the home of his parents, who live in Stanton. Our memories went back to Hiram C. Skogmo of Milwaukee, Wade Hampton Sneed of Georgia and Merle C. Cloud of Rule, Texas, and many many more comrades and friends of the 390th Bomb Group, whose families surely experienced similar ceremonies a quarter of a century ago. Back then we had a cause. Now, Billy and the thousands of others who will not return from Southern Asia have only an intangible uncertainty as to why they were there. They only knew that their country called. They went. They died. They are honored. The small bits of ribbon and the bronze medals are left. That . . . and the memories.

Why did editor Burgess use this solemn occasion connected with the War in Vietnam to look back at his own past war experience? What light, if any, do his remarks shed on the local Southern attitude to the Vietnam War? Before commenting on the awards ceremony that posthumously honored a local soldier, Burgess offered a brief, personal, account of mind and memory that takes the reader back to the editor's combat days during World War II. Interestingly, the editorial compared the underlying objectives of World War II and the War in Vietnam: during the 1940s war, all Americans had a clear understanding of the reason why America was involved and why American soldiers were sent into battle. It transpires from the above editorial that, in the late 1960s, that certainty was lacking in rural West Tennessee with regard to the Vietnam War. Typically, the editorial reflects the Southern attitude of the Vietnam War era: the South was a little more patriotic than the rest of the country; and therefore it

continued to support the military in spite of serious doubt as to the justification of the American presence in Vietnam.

A few weeks later (2 August 1968) Burgess expressed his sorrow when he reported the presentation of another posthumous award. "We were deeply touched again last week," he wrote, "when we accompanied a member of the military to the home of the Isaac Youngs for the purpose of making a posthumous award to their son, James E. Young, who was killed in Viet Nam last winter." The Bronze Star Award and various other ribbons were given to the bereaved mother by the colonel.

The soldiers from Brownsville and Haywood County were not forgotten by the home front. Haywood County Pin Stripers made Santa Claus ditty bags for the servicemen in Vietnam (21 October 1966). The girls filled the bags with fourteen comfort items, such as detective and mystery novels, cigaret lighters, nail clips and foot powder.

Captain Samuel S. Sanford wrote from Vietnam (1966), "I am still reading a hometown newspaper of two months ago. A friend of mine received it wrapped around a package." The letter inspired the American Legion Auxiliary to announce "Operation Home Town Newspaper", which would ensure that local servicemen would receive the *Brownsville States-Graphic* on a regular basis. There is no evidence to suggest that the plan was put into effect at any point in time during the remainder of the war, however.

During the War in Vietnam the local Red Cross chapter was actively involved in keeping in touch with the soldiers of Haywood County in Southeast Asia. On 13 October 1967, for instance, Mrs. Phil Williams, the new executive secretary, urged that Christmas cards, letters, and boxes to servicemen in Vietnam be mailed immediately. A successful initiative was the idea to record the voices of loved ones and family members for the servicemen in Vietnam. The local Red Cross chapter furnished "tapes of Voices from Home for servicemen in Vietnam and other bases overseas" (3 November 1967). A picture of Mr.and Mrs. W. T. Marbury of Route 2, Brownsville, listening to a tape sent to them from Vietnam by their son Richard Payne Marbury (16 February 1968) illustrated the success of the Red Cross initiative.

As far into the war as 1967, with very nearly half a million U.S. servicemen in Vietnam, and, perhaps even more significant, approximately 19,000 servicemen killed (Maurice Isserman, *Winess to War: Vietnam*, p.114), the Vietnam War was not regarded as a real war in Brownsville, Tennessee. The Vietnam War was not included in the annual poppy drive of 1967. An explanatory article in the *Brownsville States-Graphic* demonstrated this: "By buying and wearing a red poppy Saturday, Nov. 11, victims of the past three wars [World War I, World War II, and the Korean War] are honored."

Postmaster Curtis Lowery, in his capacity as president of the Chamber of Commerce asked for the names of all the local soldiers serving in Vietnam. Parents and relatives were urged to convey the

information to Mr. Lowery for Chamber of Commerce information. Mr. Lowery at that time was postmaster and commander of the VFW post in Brownsville. According to Ray Dixon, Lowery needed the names for inclusion in a roster or mailing flyer inviting those veterans to join the local vets organization. He gave the names to the local chapter and "doesn't know what ever happened to them".[104] An important source of information needed to trace the movements of local servicemen in Vietnam as well as the names of local soldiers killed during the war, was lost when Lowery transferred his records to the VFW.

Burgess reminded his readers to purchase a 3x5 American flag and pole from the American Legion Auxiliary. He added that the ladies of the D.A.R. were urging all citizens to fly a flag on the fourth [of July]. Their note quoted Byron's line, "He who loves not his country and loves not his country's flag can love nothing."

What particularly mortified Americans during the Vietnam War was that the North Vietnamese showed captured American pilots in degrading positions for propaganda purposes. By 1970 the North Vietnamese were holding many prisoners of war, although it was difficult to determine how many exactly due to the unwillingness of the North Vietnamese to publish the names of their POWs. The Jaycees of Haywood County sponsored a drive to persuade the North-Vietnamese prime minister to release the names of POWs.[105] In addition they asked North Vietnam to provide better care and treatment while it was keeping them imprisoned.

In true Southern style the *Brownsville States-Graphic* reported the news about servicemen with regard to Vietnam, even if they did not have a Haywood County address. What mattered was that their relatives lived there, or that they themselves had lived there or were known to the community through frequent visits. The "With Our Servicemen" column using information provided by the Armed Forces to keep track of the soldiers, traditionally printed on an inside page, was published on the front page (19 July 1968) to report that Marine corporal Allen M. Willyerd of Route 5, Brownsville, was serving with the Third Battalion, Fourth Marine Regiment, Third Marine Division, in Vietnam. The article outlined the purpose of corporal Willyerd's presence in Vietnam. First, he helped to capture or destroy enemy forces. Secondly, his unit was also involved in a civic action program. Under the program, American soldiers assisted the Vietnamese to complete self-help projects such as the building of wells, culverts, small bridges and schools.

Owen Burgess informally passed on an interesting Vietnam experience. "Saw another article from a Bolivar paper about a young soldier in service in Vietnam. His name is Cecil Jeter, who is the son of the late Cecil Jeter of Brownsville, and who has many relatives in this county. Seems the young soldier was a member of an ambush party that knocked off a bunch of Vietcong, who were making a night invasion up a canal. The ambush was referred to as an 'aqua bush'" (17 January 1969). Sergeant Aaron Kincaid, Jr., 20, was awarded a Bronze Star for

meritorious service during the period May, 1968 to January, 1969. He joined the Army June 3, 1967 and went to Vietnam 12 May 1968. In Vietnam he served with the 101st Airborne Division. In a sense news about the Vietnam War had become so engrained in people's lives by 1969 that sometimes tragic news affecting a Haywood County family was condensed into a few brief lines in Owen Burgess' weekly column. As in the case of an MIA: "Sorry to hear that Dick Ross has a son-in-law missing in Vietnam. The young man, who married Mr. Ross' daughter, lives in Denver, Colorado" (11 April 1969).

On 19 September 1969 the *Brownsville States-Graphic* had heard from the secretary of the Red Cross chapter that patriotic women of Haywood County had made eighty ditty bags. What makes this item in the local news paper significant is that it may be inferred that at the time mentioned eighty Haywood countians were serving in Vietnam. The bags would be filled with gifts for the soldiers in Vietnam at Christmas: "You can help brighten Christmas for the servicemen in Vietnam by contributing [the following] items: ballpoint pens, plastic soap cases, small address books, wash cloths, nail clippers, plastic cigaret cases and tooth brush holders, gum, vacuum packed tins of nuts and candies." A News Flash on the front page reported that Danny P. Presley was in hospital in Vietnam. A telegram sent to his parents informed them that he had received chest injuries from a booby trap on October 7 (10 October 1969).

Veterans Day Observance on 11 November 1969, for the first time in Haywood County history, emphasized Vietnam.The local men involved in that war were given full recognition. Gold Star Mothers of sons lost in Vietnam would light an "eternal flame" on the northeast corner of the courthouse lawn, just in front of the monument of the Confederate soldier. In his weekly column Owen Burgess wrote: "Can you imagine how happy Mrs. Charles Presley is over the fact that she is not one of the mothers who will light the eternal flame at the Veterans monument next Tuesday? Danny, her son, was recently wounded in Vietnam and will be one of the spectators at the lighting ceremonies." By celebrating the day, the paper wrote on 7 November 1969, leaders of the veterans groups hoped to show that Haywood Countians supported the president's policy and opposed the recent moratorium. ("A one-day moratorium of customary activities was planned throughout the country for October 15, to be followed by another moratorium each succeeding month with one day added to the moratorium activities each month.")[106] The commemoration activities thus served a dual purpose: the members of the community assembled in front of the courthouse and the statue of the Confederate soldier honored all the local men who died in America's past wars as well as in the ongoing Vietnam War. At the same time, the whole event was a clear demonstration of patriotism.

The patriotic nature of Brownsville and Haywood County transpires also from the mayor's proclamation in the same issue of the *Brownsville States-Graphic*:

> WHEREAS, Many young men of this community have fought for our nation, and some have sacrificed their lives, through services with the United States Armed Forces, in combat against many enemies, and
> WHEREAS, The war veterans of our country, have earned the respect and the tribute of every citizen who is today enjoying the freedoms of our [l]and because of the defenders' loyalty, courage, service and sacrifices, and
> WHEREAS, We can best acknowledge our appreciation and recognition of those brave men through full participation in the special day and week dedicated to all the defenders of our land, now
> THEREFORE, I, Julian K. Welch, Jr., mayor of the City of Brownsville, do hereby urge all my fellow citizens to fly their Stars and Stripes flag proudly and to participate in, or observe, the public Veterans Day and Veterans Week program which is to be held in our city on November the eleventh and during the week of November 9 to 15, 1969. Furthermore, I do recommend that all of our schools, churches, business establishments and other organizations assist the veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, and its many co-sponsors, toward making Veterans Day and [V]eterans Week a truly outstanding patriotic observance in this year of 1969.

The effect of the mayor's proclamation was twofold: on a national level it linked Brownsville and Haywood County with the rest of the country, while on a local level it urged everybody in the community, white and black, to be actively involved in the observance of Veterans Day.

One week later the *Brownsville States-Graphic* reported that 3,500 persons gathered on the court square to celebrate Veterans Day. Danny Presley, who had just recently returned injured from Vietnam performed the lighting of the flame duties, as Gold Star mothers of the Vietnam Conflict stood by. All eight mothers were listed.

As in any war, there were troops unaccounted for during the Vietnam War era: servicemen taken prisoner and not accounted for by the enemy for whatever reason; servicemen involved in such fierce fighting that no remains could be recovered, and servicemen operating in small units on special assignments who perished in remote areas.

> Two decades after all U.S.troops were withdrawn from Vietnam the issue of Americans still listed as Prisoners of War (POWs) or missing in action (MIAs) remained controversial and unresolved . . . The POW/MIA issue, given new momentum by president Reagan in

> the early 1980s, reemerged in 1992 when the Senate Select Committee on PWO/MIA Affairs began an investigation into the possibility that some Americans were not returned in 1973.[107]

The MIA problem also affected Brownsville and Haywood County, West Tennessee. An instance in case is the following: an article in the *Brownsville States-Graphic* of 23 October 1970 reported that Mrs. Sylvia Jefferson of Denver, Colorado, who was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Dick Ross of Brownsville, and whose husband Perry had been missing in action in Vietnam since April 1969, was granted a 30-minute visit with president Richard Nixon to hand him a petition signed by 100,000 Coloradians for Prisoners of War in Vietnam. The headline to another article of the same day broached a similar subject: "Hope to Free lt. cdr. Griffin - Citizens Urged to Write Letters". Lieutenant-commander James L. Griffin, born Dec. 27, 1932, a native of Forked Deer and a graduate from Haywood High School, had been shot down over Hanoi in May 1967. The only information received was a brief message over radio Hanoi giving his name, rank and serial number. Commander Griffin's mother, who at the time lived in the Forked Deer community, asked the readers of the *Brownsville States-Graphic* to write a letter to Xuan Thuy, North Vietnam Delegation, Paris Peace Talks, Paris, France, in order to obtain information concerning her son. Commander Griffin's wife, who lived in Albany, Georgia with her children, would try to deliver the letters to Paris in December.

The American Legion (20 November 1970) asked the *Brownsville States-Graphic* readers to write letters to Fon Duc Thang, the president of North Vietnam, asking him to uphold his country's signature on the Geneva Convention mandate to: 1. Release names of all men being held captive. 2. Release all sick and wounded. 3. Allow communication among prisoners and between prisoners and their families. 4. Allow periodic inspections of camps by an International Agency such as the Red Cross. The American Legion planned to write a letter to the congressmen and senators representing Tennessee, requesting their views on Prisoners of War. The Auxiliary further planned to write a letter specifically asking for the release of lt.cdr. James L. Griffin.

On Christmas Day 1970 the *Brownsville States-Graphic* ran the headline "Cdr. Griffin Believed Dead". A list of POWs released by the Vietnamese delegation at the peace talks in Paris indicated that lt.cdr. James L. Griffin had died two days after his capture. The POW/MIA problem has continued to haunt the American psyche to the present day.

The Draft and Deferments

One striking fact about the soldiers from Haywood County is that they were so young when they were sent to Vietnam. While it is true that a number of career soldiers from Haywood County went to Vietnam, the majority of the men who went there were barely out of high school. Christy Smith (an interview with her will follow in a later chapter), who served as a volunteer in an American military hospital in Japan which treated soldiers flown in straight from the theater of war in Vietnam, emphasized that what was so tragic was that these soldiers were so young. (Information received from the Center for Electronic Records indicates that of the 58,193 servicemen who died in Vietnam, 3,103 were eighteen at the time of death, 8,283 were nineteen, while 14,095 were twenty). In most cases they were young farm boys who had never planned to extend their education, and therefore as a rule were not eligible for a deferment. Because of the serious nature of their war wounds - they often had lost limbs - they would have a hard time finding suitable work once they returned to civilian life. Christy's experience ties in with what colonel Oliver North argues in *One More Mission: Oliver North Returns to Vietnam*, a professional and personal memoir of Vietnam:

> . . . the deep divisions over Vietnam were not only the result of fifty or sixty thousand young people's going to Canada or Sweden to avoid serving their country. The anger over Vietnam that cut so deeply into America's conscience and split our society so severely also had much to do with the disastrous outcome of the war, the way it had been prosecuted, and the grossly unfair process by which people were "selected" to participate in it. If you were in college or graduate school you could get a deferment. If you became a divinity school student you got a deferment. If you were an upper-middle class young man in America there was a very strong likelihood that you could get a deferment. And yet poorer Americans universally served when drafted because they did not have the right social or economic status to be deferred.[108]

It was true: the Vietnam War was basically fought by poorer Americans irrespective of class or race. Poorer Americans generally did not stay on beyond high school and as a result they could not get a college deferment. Neither did they have the means to escape to Canada. Some well-known Americans, among whom Paul Theroux, the author, found a safe haven in Europe. Nor did America's poor know anybody who had political influence, as in the case of the governor of Tennessee, whose son served in the National Guard in Memphis. It also took money, which they did not

have, to hire an attorney. For all these reasons it was primarily the poor, uneducated, Americans, that were drafted and that served in Vietnam. The unfairness of the draft system based on a variety of deferments was recognized by the federal government: in 1969 the lottery system was introduced, which virtually ended the unfair deferment policy.

Philip Caputo, in his battlefield autobiography *A Rumor of War*, is even more caustic than colonel Oliver North in his remarks about those who served and those who did not in the War in Vietnam. Commenting on the men of a Marine rifle platoon that he commanded, he said:

> Most of them came from the ragged fringes of the Great American Dream, from city slums and dirt farms and Appalachian mining towns. With depressing frequency, the words *2 yrs. high school* appeared in the square labeled EDUCATION in their service record books, and, under FATHER'S ADDRESS, a number had written *Unknown*. They were volunteers, but I wondered for how many enlisting had been truly voluntary. The threat of the draft came with their eighteenth birthdays, and they had no hope of getting student deferments, like the upper-middle-class boys who would later revile them as killers.[109]

The soldiers who served in Vietnam were very young. All the evidence points to the fact that the men were drafted or enlisted straight from high school, which meant that they were usually eighteen years old. It is also made plain by Christy Smith, Philip Caputo, and colonel Oliver North that those sent to Vietnam had a background marked by hard work and poverty.

The American president responsible at the initial stage for sending these young Americans from the lower strata of society to Vietnam, was John F. Kennedy. His assassination in Dallas, Texas, in November 1963, barely three weeks after Diem was assassinated in South Vietnam, remains one of the twentieth century's baffling mysteries.

The *Brownsville States-Graphic* looked at the national news through the eyes of the citizens of Brownsville. On Friday, 29 November 1963 the local newspaper reported that the president's death shocked the nation and that church services were held as a memorial to president Kennedy. Elementary and high schools of the county were closed on Monday, November 25, in observance of the national day of mourning, as were federal offices and county offices. All other business in the community ceased between the hours of eleven and one so that everyone could watch the funeral on television, or hear it on the radio. In a second front page article, "Three Brownsvillians See; A Day in Dallas Prove[s] Historic", Susan Sharpe described the experiences of Dale Thornton, Amy Floyd, and herself, in Dallas on the day president Kennedy died there. Susan

wrote that before they went to bed on Thursday they had decided to go and see Kennedy's plane come in at Love Field. However, they woke up about eleven o'clock Friday morning. As they were hurrying to go out a friend called and told them that Kennedy had been shot. They immediately took a cab downtown. They went to Neiman Marcus, where a microphone was set up while they were there. Everyone was gathering in the store lobby on the main floor and Mr. Stanley Marcus, president of the store, told everyone to bow their heads in silent prayer. "The president was dead!" In the street everyone was asking "WHY? Who was it? and Why did they pick Dallas?"

Patriotism and the War in Vietnam

In 1965 the debate about Vietnam in national politics also made headlines in Brownsville's local newspaper. The *Brownsville States-Graphic* reported that president Johnson was expected to compromise on the situation in South Vietnam sometime during 1965 and move toward neutralization, by which the editor meant that the president would refrain from any action that would escalate the conflict. On Christmas Eve 1965, however, the American presence in Vietnam increased. Even in Brownsville, in the traditionally patriotic South, there was a notable lack of enthusiasm about the war. The editorial, entitled "War and Christmas", had this to say about Vietnam:

> This is a land of jungle, marshes, hills and foreign customs; land inhabited by people who know not of Christ and his teachings; a land where we are not wanted, a land in which we know not why we are there, a land of sudden death and torture, a land unknown to Santa Claus . . . We here at home find the threat of the Vietcong only as blackened print in our newspaper, but to our boys, it is the constant shadow of death or torture.

A few years later, student protests to American involvement in Vietnam were the subject of debate. An article in the *Brownsville States-Graphic* of 24 March 1967, commenting upon an anti-Vietnam War meeting in neighboring Shelby County the previous week, is proof of the patriotism of the local paper. It condemned the demonstrators for being undemocratic: individuals who did not agree with the demonstrators were barred from the discussion.

The impression of the patriotic stance of the Brownsville paper is solidified by quite diverse matters: for example, an editorial in the same issue praised Ronald Reagan, who, as governor of California "ironed out"

the student uprisings at UCLA, Berkeley. The newspaper even argued that it was too bad that Reagan was not omnipotent, "as many states could use his whip cracking policy". In another example, in the summer of 1966 the *Brownsville States-Graphic* reported: "Christmas for Vietnamese Kids Planned by Special Forces". Captain Sanford wrote to the editor of the newspaper about a Christmas party for the children near his camp in Kontum, Vietnam. He wanted to show them how Americans celebrate Christmas. He asked the people of Brownsville and Haywood County to send clothing, toys, soap, candy, gum and other things such as children like. Yet another example reported in the *Brownsville States-Graphic* was a pro-South Vietnam rally held at Haywood High auditorium on September 26. Guest speaker was Rev. James Colbert, vice-president and International Director of Missions for the Christian Anti-Communism Crusade. He spoke about the subject "Should America Be Involved in South Vietnam[?]." The question was rhetorical and the meeting at Haywood High School was really a patriotic pep rally. The Vietnam War even invaded the business section of the *Brownsville States-Graphic*. In the business forecast for 1967 it was felt that the Vietnam War would continue after 1967, although the good news was that the tide of the battle was swinging in America's favor. At the same time, the paper argued, American commitment would have to be increased in order to achieve a victory. Patriotism is the driving force behind Independence Day also. Traditionally July 4 is a time for reflection on war and peace. Appropriately, the local newspaper published an editorial that placed the Vietnam War in the larger perspective of all the wars the United States had fought and won since 1776. "We are presently involved in a war. A war in a distant land. A war being fought to protect a similar occurrence on our own soil. We hear complaints from a small minority clamoring for the cessation of this conflict . . ." It argued that the right attitude for Americans was to volunteer and to give their lives to protect their deeply cherished freedom and liberties. Patriotism rather than protest is the distinctive feature that characterizes most Americans. It is this attitude that is illustrated in the *Brownsville States-Graphic* on 7 November 1969 in an article entitled "The Silent Majority". The article expressed the essential need for people to speak out, by writing their congressmen or senators on the issues which confronted the country. Ideally the silent majority, by expressing their views, could drown the voices of the vocal minority "[who] . . . carry on demonstrations and literally tear down our country". Publication occurred just a few days after president Nixon's important speech on Vietnam on 3 November 1969, in which he first had used the term "silent majority".[110] The televised address described the history of American involvement in Vietnam since 1954. It was in this speech that president Nixon restated his Vietnamization policy, which enabled the U.S. to gradually withdraw its troops from Southeast Asia. In January 1973 president Nixon announced the Vietnam Peace settlement (28 December 1973) and the return of all American POWs.

Civil Rights

The *Brownsville States-Graphic*, during the Vietnam War era, was a white, conservative paper. The growing assertiveness of blacks in the United States after 1945 was not a chance development. The sacrifices of black servicemen during World War II had made discrimination in the United States an issue. The mood in Washington had changed: president Roosevelt's overtures to black leaders had encouraged government protection for civil rights. Also, by 1960 two-thirds of Tennessee blacks lived in towns or cities, creating the proximity and numbers for collective action. Interestingly, Brownsville and Haywood County constituted a rural area in West Tennessee where a major part of the population was black, but because the black population was spread out over a large area, local civil rights activities in some instances only occurred because they were initiated by such out of state activists as Eric Weinberger, for example, a 31-year-old resident of Norwich, Connecticut, who was arrested in Brownsville on 9 March 1963 for marching without a permit. At the same time organization and discipline among blacks had been nurtured in places like the Highlander Folk School in Grundy County, Tennessee. During the 1950s Highlander became a training center for community activists and civil rights leaders.[111]

The struggle over civil rights in Brownsville and Haywood County was to increase considerably in the first half of the decade. On 24 June 1960 the local paper contained the following news: "The first negro registrant in the City of Brownsville, the Rev. Hiram Newbern, was arrested here Tuesday afternoon for disturbing the peace. In his possession was literature from the Highlander Folk School which to our way of thinking is strictly a communist organization. We are sorry to hear that any of our local people are interested in organizations of this sort." The use of the term "communists" was quite effective. The memory of senator McCarthy's crusade against communism during the previous decade was still fresh in the national memory. Its use by conservative white Southerners to fight change was totally unjustified, of course. But it was the first indication of the gathering storm.

Its overture was as inevitable as it was sudden: it came with the apprehension of the first black registrant in Brownsville. Rev. Hiram Newbern was arrested for disturbing the peace - he carried with him literature from the Highlander Folk School, considered a communist organization by white conservatives at the time. What is surprising is that this major local news story, was not published in a main article, but referred to in the editor's weekly column of news, gossip and humorous stories. The *Brownsville States-Graphic* toned down the incident, almost to the extent of ignoring it. This is in fact what the paper was to do

routinely with eruptions of racial tension. Throughout the 1960s and into the 1970s, when the struggle for civil rights taxed interracial relationships in Brownsville and Haywood County severely, the *Brownsville States-Graphic* consistently reported local developments in a subdued way. The daily newspapers published in Memphis, Jackson, and Nashville, or elsewhere reported on these matters in much greater detail.

The fight for civil rights escalated to such an extent that, in the summer of 1961, national television and the national press descended on Brownsville to report on the plight of the blacks living in Tent City. The civil rights movement of the 1960s deeply affected the multiracial community in West Tennessee. At the end of the summer of 1960 race ceased to be a problem that could be controlled or settled on a local level. The *Brownsville States-Graphic* on 16 September 1960 appeared with the banner headline "Federal Injunction Sought Against 27 White Persons and Two Banks in Haywood County". The article referred to a federal civil rights suit filed against local banks and citizens. The accompanying anti-civil rights editorial also printed on the front page was entitled "Whither Headed". It is worth noting that the editorial was not by the editor of the *Brownsville States-Graphic*, but was in fact the editorial printed in *The Commercial Appeal* published in Memphis the previous day. The editor of the *Brownsville States-Graphic* thus avoided the difficult task of having to write his own editorial. Printing the editorial of *The Commercial Appeal* had both the advantage of authority and a distancing effect.

The suit charged the defendants with conspiring to prevent voting registration of blacks and threatening and taking economic action against blacks. The serious nature of the economic action was specified as follows in the editorial: ". . . terminating sharecropping and tenant farming relationships with negroes . . . refusing to sell necessaries, goods and services for either cash or credit . . . refusing to lend money to some of the negroes . . . circulating lists of names of negroes who were leaders in registration and voting activity ... inducing suppliers of merchants not to deal with such merchants . . . inducing merchants, landowners and others to penalize economically the negroes; inducing wholesalers not to deal with negro merchants." The editorial denied that the federal government had the right to tell citizens and financial institutions whom they could do business with. The fact that the local weekly printed the editorial of the major regional daily newspaper indicated that the view there expressed reflected current opinion in West Tennessee. The civil rights suit was to develop into a continuing story.

In its next issue (23 September 1960) the *Brownsville States-Graphic* reported that the serving of subpoenas on Haywood County citizens for violations of civil rights had caused considerable editorial comment from the nation's newspapers. The New Orleans *Times-Picayune* ran an editorial similar to that of *The Commercial Appeal*, while that in *The Washington Post* took the opposite side of the question. *The Commercial Appeal*, a Memphis-based regional newspaper, took the view

that the white merchants, landowners, and bankers from Brownsville and Haywood County should insist that the accusations be proved in court. The paper denied that the federal government had the right to tell financial institutions and private citizens "to whom they shall lend and sell, whom they shall house and feed, and whom they shall employ". The editorial in *The Times-Picayune* expressed the same conservative opinion. Both Southern newspapers sided with the white conservatives of Brownsville and Haywood County, but the non-Southern *Washington Post* did not and discussed the violations of the civil rights of the black population.

The following legal move was announced in the *Brownsville States-Graphic* of 21 October 1960. The twenty-seven citizens and the two banks referred to were scheduled to appear at the U.S. Post Office the following Monday to make depositions before a representative of the United States Justice Department. At the same time it was announced that the trial would be set at a later date in the U.S. federal court in Memphis. On November 11, it was reported that the twenty-seven defendants had made a motion for the government to be more specific in its complaints and allegations. One week later, on 18 November the *Brownsville States-Graphic* reported that another 34 white citizens and two additional business institutions had been charged by the civil rights division of the Department of Justice. The charge was that they had acted to prevent Haywood County blacks from voting. On 25 November the paper matter-of-factly reported that the Haywood County defendants were taking the Fifth Amendment. The questions which the defendants refused to answer were about the alleged lists of negro voters and civic leaders. On 9 December it was reported in the *Brownsville States-Graphic* that thirty-nine Haywood Countians had been ordered to appear in federal court in Memphis on 19 December to defend themselves against charges made by the civil rights division of the federal government. The thirty-nine defendants were charged with interfering with the rights of others to register to vote.

The civil rights problems of Haywood County gained national attention when NBC and CBS television news showed an interview with Dr. T.C. Chapman, the then mayor. The mayor came to the defense of the accused white persons, saying that he knew credit was being extended to Haywood County blacks "the same as always, depending upon whether or not they are good credit risks". The *Brownsville States-Graphic* on 16 December 1960 published an article on this; the paper also reported that the mayor received a letter from someone in Iowa "who was very much interested and favorable to segregation. He stated that in his part of Iowa, they received a very one-sided view of the situation, and wished to know the South's side of the Question." In a leading article on 23 December the *Brownsville States-Graphic* reported that thirty-seven Haywood Countians had been defending themselves in federal court against the civil rights division of the United States Justice Department. The defendants claimed that the 1957 Civil Rights Act was unconstitutional with modern

farming methods creating changes. Increased mechanization was the cause for the dismissal of blacks by the landowners. On December 30, it was reported that judge Boyd in the federal court in Memphis claimed that he lacked authority under the 1957 Civil Rights Act to stop the evictions by ordering the renewal or continuation of sharecropping and tenant agreements. Hence the ruling in the negro eviction case would move to a higher court: the United States Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals in Cincinnati.

The *Brownsville States-Graphic* meanwhile reported on 13 January that sixteen more landowners in Haywood County sought evictions. In federal court they asked to evict black sharecroppers for legitimate reasons. On 17 February a leading article on the front page of the *Brownsville States-Graphic* was headlined "U.S. Court of Appeals to Hear Landlord-Tenant Case on Monday". The judges' decision would be anxiously awaited by some seventy-five Haywood Countians under a restraining order forbidding them to evict negro tenants from their farms. One of the consequences of the eviction policy in Brownsville and Haywood County was that many blacks now lived in Tent City. (An encampment on donated land in Fayette County owned by Shephard Towles, a black man; a white merchant, whose name has been kept secret to the present day, donated the tents. Another camp was set up off Tennessee 57 near Moscow on land owned by Gertrude Beasley. - *The Jackson Sun, special issue on the 40th anniversary of Jackson's civil rights movement,* October 2000). Here they lived in all weathers for a two-year period under primitive circumstances.

The federal government stepped in when it became apparent that many of the poor blacks lacked proper food. The *Brownsville States-Graphic* wryly commented "Plenty of Takers As Crowds Swarm Armory for Handouts of Free Surplus Government Food" (14 July). Hundreds of blacks came to the Armory each day to receive free government surplus food ordered to the area by president Kennedy. According to reports twelve carloads of food were sent to Memphis for distribution in Haywood County and adjacent Fayette County. From the tone of the article it was clear that the local people resented the action taken by Washington. "Local officials, familiar with the situation in Haywood County said there was no apparent need, and that any isolated cases that came up were well protected by government agencies for such purposes." No explanation was received from Washington for declaring city and county a disaster area and sending the food to Haywood County and neighboring Fayette County, with their heavily black population.

As a result of the evictions and the subsequent lawsuit brought against the leaders of the white community and its leading institutions, the relationship between blacks and whites in Brownsville and Haywood County was approaching its nadir. This was reflected by a *Brownsville States-Graphic* front page editorial with the unambiguous headline "Much Ado About Nothing". It expressed the anger of the white community with

phrases such as: "disgust for our national leaders", and: "pity for the negro race caused by their eager acceptance of gifts, which, when given without justification, tends to kill the incentive, which has been created since the negro's emancipation from slavery".

Direct Action: Sit-Ins and Freedom Rides

Following the move towards desegregation in Nashville, which became the first major city in the South to begin desegregating its public facilities, student activists in several Tennessee cities (Nashville, Memphis, Jackson, Chattanooga) increased the pressure on restaurants, hotels and transportation facilities that refused to drop the color barrier. But it was the "direct action" by four black college students in Greensboro, North Carolina, really, that marked an awakening from the rigid bonds of segregation in the South: on 1 February 1960 these four black students sat down at a F.W. Woolworth's lunch counter and remained seated until the store closed. Two weeks later mass sit-ins began in Nashville, Tennessee. "A revolution was under way," said John Seigenthaler, editor and publisher of *The Tennessean*, the most liberal of Tennessee's major newspapers. When 1960 arrived, *The Tennessean* had already editorially endorsed school integration *(The Jackson Sun,* October 2000). A group of students from Nashville, Tennessee, in 1961 participated in the Freedom Rides, in which groups of black and white passengers tried to integrate bus terminals in the South. (The group of Nashville students travelled to Birmingham, Alabama, to continue the Freedom Ride which left Washington D.C. on 4 May 1961 and had stranded as a result of hostile action in Birmingham some ten days later: the freedom riders, fearing for their safety, flew to New Orleans. On 17 May the Birmingham police arrested the Nashville freedom riders and placed them in protective custody. The police drove them back to Tennessee and dropped them off at the state line. After they reached Nashville, they went straight back to Birmingham. This time the head of the state highway patrol agreed to protect the freedom riders, after a meeting between governor Patterson and John Seigenthaler, who represented the Justice Department. The Freedom Ride left Birmingham on 20 May 1961. However, police protection disappeared as the freedom riders entered Montgomery city limits. The latter were beaten by an angry mob. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., flew to Montgomery and held a mass meeting to support the freedom riders. Thousands of white demonstrators surrounded the church so that nobody could leave. Robert Kennedy called governor Patterson, who declared martial law. The freedom riders continued to Mississippi; at the bus terminal in Jackson the police tricked them into a police vehicle by marching them through the white terminal. They were tried by a local court on 25 May 1961 and sentenced to sixty days in the state

penitentiary).

All these activities were the prelude to the attempt on the part of blacks to be registered to vote. The white, conservative, population of the Southern region was aware that the sheer number of the blacks (in West Tennessee, for example, blacks heavily outnumbered the white population), should they all be registered to vote, would unavoidably introduce political change. Basically, it was this fear of potential political change that motivated the white merchants, farmers, and bankers in Brownsville and Haywood County to act the way they did.

Civil Rights in Brownsville & Haywood County

On 21 July 1961, it was reported that federal district judge Marion S. Boyd had dismissed a suit seeking an injunction barring the Haywood County, Tennessee, Election Board from discriminating against blacks seeking to register to vote. Judge Boyd stated that blacks in Haywood County had no difficulty in registering.

An out-of-court settlement between attorneys for seventy Haywood County landowners and the Justice Department of the federal government was reported in the *Brownsville States-Graphic* on 4 May 1962. The settlement legally ended an almost two-year conflict over the interference of the white population with the rights of the black population to register for the vote. A further indication that the worst of the racial strife was over and that city and county were sailing into quieter waters was the announcement on 12 July 1963, that the city was hiring "two negroes as policemen here". The city police commissioner stated that the two men were the first blacks to be hired as policemen in the city's history. The editorial in the *Brownsville States-Graphic* called the news sensational. But the added explanation that the two new officers were assigned to the black business district of the city and possibly the black residential area made it clear that full integration was still a long way off. Another sign of racial integration in Haywood County was reported on the front page of the *Brownsville States-Graphic* on 28 May 1965. For the first time in the twentieth century "a negro citizen of the county" ran for public office. His name was Joe S. Taylor of the 9th District and he had entered the race for road commissioner.

On 2 August 1965 an important editorial on race relations appeared in the *Brownsville States-Graphic* It carried the headline "Times That Try Men's Souls" and was inspired by the demonstrations that were taking place all over the country. The editor urged members of both races in the community to keep their heads cool and to use their judgement before resorting to actions that they would later regret. The editorial strongly disapproved of the organizing and functioning of "Bi-Racial" groups, pointing out at the same time that the *Brownsville States-Graphic* in the

past had avoided controversial news regarding race relations, precisely because the two races had lived harmoniously in Brownsville and Haywood County for many years. On 16 August 1965 it was reported in the newspaper that the members of the Haywood County and Brownsville School Boards had received registered letters from the NAACP members and parents of children who wished to integrate the white schools of city and county.

Freedom marchers reached remote Haywood County in October 1965. It was reported (11 October 1965) that Eric Weinberger, "racial agitator", who had been charged with assault and battery during a freedom march in Brownsville several weeks earlier, had been surrendered to the circuit court of the 13th judicial circuit that week by his attorney, R.B. Sugarmon, Jr., of Memphis. "The bearded Weinberger, who was out on $1500 bond, was scheduled to appear before the court last week, failed to show up until early this week, and at his request his charges were retired from the docket on his promise to vacate himself from the jurisdiction of this court and payment of court cost. Should he return, charges will reappear on the docket." Weinberger led an anti-segregation demonstration in Brownsville in 1963. He had been a frequent visitor to Brownsville for two years. On 6 August 1963, (black) Brownsville undertaker Al Rawls told judge Dickinson that Weinberger had married a few days earlier and that the married couple had been staying in Brownsville with colored people "living over the B&S Laundry". Interestingly, Rawls went on to say that Weinberger was a foreigner (meaning that he was a non-Southerner), who marched without a permit and that nobody knew anything about him.

On 8 May 1964 an article in the Local News Briefs column of the *Brownsville States-Graphic* demonstrated that the civil rights battle was not over yet. According to this news story three hundred Haywood County negroes listened to a speech on the subject of "How Goes the Fight for Civil Rights" by Alfred Baker Lewis, national treasurer of the NAACP at Good Hope M.B. Church. In Haywood County as indeed elsewhere in the United States the black churches played a vital part in the struggle for civil rights. Black churches everywhere functioned as safe havens in the on-going battle. The churches were the headquarters of the black protest movement. All the action, whether this took the form of peaceful demonstrations or political speeches emanated from the church, for the simple reason that the black churches were the only places where the blacks were really free from the interference of the white authorities. Here they were out of the white public eye.

The free food plan (an opportunity of sorts for the government to get rid of its surplus stock of food) alluded to earlier, and initiated by the Kennedy administration in 1961, caused much social unrest in Brownsville and Haywood County. It was replaced by a program of a more permanent nature that came as a result of new legislation and that, moreover, did not antagonize the whites of the community because it benefitted local white

merchants. The *Brownsville States-Graphic* reported on 1 January 1965: "County Court To Meet Monday With Food Stamp Plan Scheduled". The editorial expressed the view that this was a business opportunity which should be secured by Haywood County merchants. On 2 April the newspaper reported that "the U.S. Department of Agriculture's food stamp program for needy families got underway Thursday, April 1, in Haywood and Fayette Counties". From the point of view of race relations in both city and county the new food stamp program was a marked improvement, because it did not require the offensive sight, to some whites, of big trucks off-loading free food parcels and poor blacks standing in line to receive them. The food stamp program for needy families filled a real need: the county offices of the Tennessee Department of Public Welfare received applications from 247 households with 1.517 persons in Haywood County. The new program was discreet. It allowed recipients to be treated with dignity, and because the food stamps were spent locally, all groups in the community stood to gain.

Integrating City and County School Systems

Schools constituted another area that separated the white and black communities, but here too the time for change had come. On 7 May 1965 it was reported that members of the Haywood County School Board in a meeting at the courthouse had formulated plans for the compliance of school integration as set forth in the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The Board voted unanimously in favor of the free choice plan, which was explained in the *Brownsville States-Graphic* by the Board of Education as follows:

> All citizens of Brownsville and Haywood County, Tennessee hereby are notified that the Congress of the United States of America passed a law entitled The Civil Rights Act of 1964. We are informed that this Act applies to schools operated by the Brownsville City Board of Education, and that said Act requires the assignment of students to public schools and within such schools without regard to their race, color, religion or national origin. Pursuant to and in compliance with said Act, the City Board of Education submits the following plan: students attending the schools operated by the City Board of Education, and all parents and guardians of students attending said school system, hereby are notified that students will be assigned to schools operated by the City Board of Education on a FREEDOM OF CHOICE plan.

The times and places where students must be registered, as well as the

date "when the choice of schools must be exercised" would be announced in the local newspaper. The ostensible move by the Board of Education towards full integration of the school system was apparent in the text of the public notice in the newspaper: "All students will be assigned to the school of their choice as herein-above designated insofar as possible. Said assignment will not be made on the basis of race, color, religion, or national origin of the student concerned . . . From and after this date, teachers will be hired on the basis of ability and to the best interest of the school system, and without regard for the race, color, religion or national origin of said teacher, or of the pupils to be taught." On May 28, the paper reported that, taking advantage of the freedom of choice law, 37 black children were enrolled at formerly white elementary schools, while the county superintendent of education stated that some black children had signed up to attend the till then white Haywood High school.

Integration of the schools operated by the Haywood [County] Board and the City Board did not come about easily though, because it slyly was resisted. The Haywood Board received a letter from the Department of Justice which mentioned that complaints had been received from negro parents in Haywood County (*Brownsville States-Graphic*, 26 August 1966). These parents complained that their children had been deprived of equal protection of the laws, on account of their race, in the operation of the public schools in the county. In his letter the assistant attorney-general pointed out that in the 1965-1966 school year there were 4,354 negro pupils out of a total enrollment of 5,533 in the Haywood County school system, with thirty-six black students attending schools with whites. The projected figures for 1966-1967 showed that there would be 4,293 negro pupils in the system, with forty-four of them attending schools with whites. The assistant attorney-general stated that the Board would need to take steps to make the freedom of choice plan more effective. In its reponse the Board argued that it had offered a freedom of choice plan to every student in the county, regardless of race, color, creed or national origin.

The federal government applied further pressure when Justice Department attorneys "filed in federal court a list of cross and house burnings of negroes which are part of the government evidence in the Haywood County, Tenn., schools desegregation suit" (*Brownsville States-Graphic*, 26 May 1967). The trial seeking the shutdown of the Brownsville school system and putting its operation under the Haywood County School Board was due to start 12 June 1967. The attorneys for the Justice Department's civil rights division listed the following incidents:

> July 20, 1966 - cross burning at home of Annie Lee Jackson, candidate for public office, and her home burned to the ground. June 1966 - threatening letters regarding their civil rights activity received by "Mr. Bullock", B. Forrest and Henry Anthony. May 16,

1966 - following a Klan meeting, the home of negro leader, Odell Sanders, dynamited. In October, 1965, a cross was burned at Sanders' home, following enrollment of Sanders' children in former all-white school, threatening phone calls received. Fire set to store of Mrs. Manon, negro active in civil rights; shots fired and crosses burned near homes of Robert Mathis, Jr., and William Hays. May 11, 1966 shots fired into home of Charles Rogers, negro active in civil rights. May 4, 1966 - shots fired into home of Dave Mike Jones. April 23, 1966 - about 400 persons attended Klan rally in front of the courthouse in Brownsville where speakers objected to desegregation. December, 1965 - two carloads of white men visited home of L.N. Evans, negro with children in previously all-white school, threatening him about his complaint about treatment of his children on white school bus; cross burned following night in front of his home. Oct. 16, 1965 - crosses burned on high school football field and at junction of Highway 70 and West Main in Brownsville.

Members of the Haywood County Board of Education and the Brownsville City School Board were to appear in federal court in Memphis on 12 June 1967 (9 June 1967). The charges brought against them by the Justice Department specified that the "Freedom of Choice plan of school integration has not been successful here due to the dual school system and the hostility of the community". The leading article in the *Brownsville States-Graphic* of 16 June 1967 was about the Freedom of Choice law suit. The federal court room in Memphis was "jammed" with Haywood Countians when the case was heard by judge Bailey Brown. The Justice Department was seeking "merger of the city system into the county system", along with complete desegregation of the schools. E.D. Thompson, the superintendent of the city schools testified that the City Board felt that its freedom of choice plan was in compliance with the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Kirby Matherne, chairman of the County Board told of how the Board felt that zoning of the county with its pockets of negro population, would undoubtedly lead to segregation all over again. He testified that his feeling was that if zoned, white citizens would merely re-distribute themselves in other communities, leaving the negro population in all-negro schools. Testimony before the court revealed that many negroes had not filed choice forms for the 1967-1968 school year. The *Brownsville States-Graphic* concluded that the government was attempting to prove that fear had prevented the freedom of choice plan from being effective in desegregating the schools. Attorneys representing the federal government continually questioned witnesses about telephone calls, burning of crosses and one incident of firing into a house. The defense had attempted to prove that such incidents were provoked by white civil rights workers living in homes of negroes. Witnesses testified that since Rights workers were gone their

troubles ended.

Two mysterious explosions which caused severe damage to a house and a garage, were reported on 20 May 1966: "The first explosion damaged the west side of the home of Odell Sanders and family, located on the northwest corner of Margin and Russell streets, and the other blast, which occurred some 11 minutes later, practically ruined a new, concrete, block building which was soon to be the location of Bill Harmon's repair shop. This building is located on the Alamo road, adjacent to the Fairgrounds." The explosions were related to the civil rights activities that were causing commotion at the time. Although Mr. Sanders had been active in civil rights activities, he could offer no explanation, while Mr. Harmon stated that as far as he knew, he had never bothered anyone, white or colored. Yet the explosions appeared race related; just before the first explosion "at 10:46 p.m. police received reports of gunshots and cross-burnings just outside city limits on Jefferson street. It is in this neighborhood that a white man and woman are said to be staying with a negro family. This couple Shoshana Levenberg of New York and Jim Amery of Pennsylvania were interrogated by local officers concerning the report of cross burning; they reported seeing a 1966 Cadillac automobile in front of where one of the crosses was placed. Doyle Ellington, local cyclops of the Brownsville Klavern of United Klans of America, told officers that 'it was not done by any of our members.'"[112] In the next issue the *Brownsville States-Graphic* reported that there was no truth in the rumor that the FBI had arrested two individuals in connection with the explosions.

Civil rights and Vietnam were the subjects that on a national as well as on a regional and local level caused much pain and controversy. Both issues dominated the news in the United States for the better part of the decade. It is important, however, to distinguish between the South and the rest of the United States in any discussion of the struggle for civil rights or the Vietnam War: anti-war demonstrations in the South never reached the momentum that could be observed in other regions of the United States. There was an entirely different war going on in the South, though; in West Tennessee, as indeed in the entire Southern region, this war partly consisted of a series of legal battles aimed at maintaining the status quo, or delaying change. But it entailed much more, as reports in the *Brownsville States-Graphic* clearly demonstrate. The civil rights issue caused much unrest and affected both blacks and whites in the city as well as in the county: evictions, demonstrations, and thwarted attempts by blacks to be registered to vote, added up to much unpleasantness, especially when the national press, radio, and television arrived in rural West Tennessee to report on this domestic war. It is plain that the civil rights issue, which, for obvious reasons was mainly concentrated in the South, was a much more important fight for many white Southerners than the War in distant Vietnam, affecting as it did practically the whole community. What makes the 1960s such an interesting decade for all

those intrigued by the Southern perspective is that, by and large, the Vietnam War and the other war, the struggle for racial equality, coincided. This is reflected on the front page of the *Brownsville States-Graphic* on 23 June 1967, where they appear side by side. A picture of Mr. and Mrs. James A. Land showed them receiving posthumous rewards - the Purple Heart; the National Defense Service Medal; the Viet Nam Service Medal and Republic of Viet Nam Campaign Ribbon Bar and two lapel buttons - in memory of their son. A solemn moment of the War in Vietnam condensed to the loss made visible in the lives of one family in rural Tennessee. Next to this picture appeared the headline, "Federal Judge With[h]olds Decision Until School Boards Submit Plan". During the trial which centered on the failing integration of black and white schools in Brownsville and Haywood County, and took place in judge Bailey Brown's courtroom in Memphis, U.S. attorneys constantly sought to connect the bombing of negro houses, telephone threats and cross burnings to school desegregation in the county. The local Boards tried to prove that Freedom of Choice was working in Haywood County. Government witnesses testified that they had seen crosses burned and that they had received threatening telephone calls; they also reported one house bombing.

The leading article in the *Brownsville States-Graphic* of 11 August ran "School Board to Comply with Judge's Decision on Integration of Faculties". This court order in effect set the integration of city and county schools in motion. As a first step, so ordered by the court, at least three black teachers would each be assigned to the all white Haywood High and Anderson Grammar Schools, two black teachers to the also white Haywood Elementary School, and one black teacher each to the white Bradford and Holly Grove Schools. At least three white teachers were to be assigned to the all black Carver High and East Side Elementary Schools and two white teachers each to the also black Bailey and Douglas Schools. Furthermore, the court order specified that race could not be a factor in the planning of school bus routes. Moreover, it was stated that in each school all curricular and extra-curricular activities were required to be completely desegregated. The policy of closing inferior school buildings was to be continued so that by 1970-71 there would be no elementary school in the county attended only by blacks and therefore equipped poorly. On top of all that the School Board were ordered to file a report with the [court] clerk each year prior to October 15th indicating the racial composition of the pupils in each grade and the racial composition of the faculty. Finally, the court would retain jurisdiction pending the further implementation of the plan. Judge Bailey Brown's decree thus effectively put an end to segregated schools in Brownsville and Haywood County. So the *Brownsville States-Graphic* on 25 August reported "Faculties For City And County Schools Named For Fall Term", specifying teachers' names for the different schools without any reference to race. It was the sort of information that had great significance for the

local population. It also was a very important step towards full integration.

The road to full integration was a long one and was taken by the white conservative population with great reluctance. The reason why they moved towards integration at all was because they were forced to by court orders. The legal battles inexorably forced the white population to accept full integration, but the fact that every move had to be fought over in court also implied that the process was slow and because of that emotions often ran high. As pointed out above, the struggle for civil rights, of which the fight for the full integration of the black and white schools was an integral part, was a war whose battles were fought in the courts of Memphis and Cincinnati, Ohio (Court of Appeals). All the legal battles that were to result in the fully integrated Haywood High School in 1970 were reported in the local newspaper. In order to fully comprehend the struggle over civil rights we will trace the most significant moves as they were reported by the local newspaper. The next legal battle, then, was described on 13 October 1967 in an article entitled "County Court Names Committee To Work With Local School Board". The members of the committee were C.H. Stuart, Hubert Barcroft, Malcolm Smith, Dixon Hood, Dr. Byron Cochran. (There was no reference to the racial composition of the committee.) The committee would work with the County School Board in planning adequate schools to replace eighteen rural schools recently abandoned. The *Brownsville States-Graphic* of 27 October, reported that a public auction had been held at the courthouse the preceding Saturday, when the Haywood County Department of Education disposed of twenty-four rural schools that had been closed as a result of the county's school consolidation program. Meanwhile, the School Boards were confronted with an appeal from the Justice Department. According to Lyle Reid, attorney for Haywood County, the notice of appeal would probably be heard in Cincinnati. He also stated that apparently the Justice Department thought that the court had failed to give sufficient consideration to charges of intimidation and harassment.

On 26 January 1968 the headline read: "Haywood Negroes Protest Lack of Service on Local Juries." The article, citing *The Commercial Appeal*, reported that a suit which charged discrimination in the selection of jurors in predominantly black Haywood County had been filed in a Memphis federal court. The action was brought by Odell Sanders, a civil rights worker whose Brownsville home had been bombed, and Mrs. Nola W. Bond, a Brownsville grocery store owner. They asked the court to order that existing jury rolls be discarded and new ones assembled, with the six-to-five ratio of blacks to whites in the county used as a basis for the new venue list. The suit charged that blacks were systematically excluded from grand and petit jury lists, although there were 6,295 blacks of voting age and 5,497 whites 21 years or older according to the 1960 census list of Haywood County.

The recommendation from the state department of education, long-

awaited by both groups of the community, reached the School Board in the summer of 1968 (July 5). It entailed a long-range program of development of the county educational system. This involved the decision to either close or retain existing schools. Plans also foresaw the building of new schools, notably a new school in the Sunny Hill community and a new High School. When the schools opened their doors again after the summer, the new school year started with closer integration of pupils and faculty as decreed by the court. The closing of four rural schools caused overcrowding in the remaining school buildings. Another initial problem was a shortage of teachers. Increased integration among pupils and faculty members also created its share of the opening hysteria, but, as the local newspaper reported on 30 August 1968, by midweek rough spots began to level off.

The Brownsville City School Board, then, was involved in a continuing legal battle with the Justice Department in Washington D.C. In November 1968 federal judge Bailey Brown decreed that local officials must file a plan with the court containing a provision permitting children to transfer from a school with their racial majority to a school with their racial minority. The plan was to eradicate the dual school system in Haywood County. The Haywood Quarterly Court met in regular session on Monday, 13 January 1969. An important issue was the School Board's request for issuance of additional bonds as part of the previously court-authorized million and a half dollar educational improvement program. The Justice Department rejected the plan of school integration, which had been submitted by the local School Boards. "According to county attorney Lyle Reid a hearing before judge Bailey Brown of the U.S. federal court in Memphis was imminent." The local School Boards contended that only by a process of gradual integration could the public school system be preserved in Haywood County (May 9). The federal court, however, ordered complete school integration (May 16). In reponse a group of citizens, including county attorney Lyle Reid, would go to Washington, seeking help on the local integration problems.

Owen Burgess offered the following comment on the same front page: "Judge Brown's decision was only a few hours old when reports were out that drives were on to establish private schools. We have heard of one such project and to date several thousand of dollars have been pledged to the project. As we understand it, proper procedures are being taken to secure proper housing and teachers for the proposed school. We feel sure that there will be others with similar plans, too." Members of the Haywood County School Board (which by then included the former City School Board) finalized plans to comply with a federal court order. Plans of the School Board were "to request an appeal of judge Brown's order of complete school integration. This appeal was to be based on plans to construct a new, centrally-located high school to accommodate all the students of Haywood County" (May 30). Acting on the Haywood County court's resolution to build a new high school, a firm of architects from

Nashville was selected. The School Board also appointed colonel Lloyd White, a retired Air Force colonel, as principal of Haywood High School (June 6). Judge Bailey Brown granted a year's extension in complete integration of Haywood County High Schools. The reason why judge Bailey granted the extension was that it would take a year to construct the new school (June 13). Bids for the construction of the proposed new Haywood High School were opened on August 28. The school would be ready by 1 Septemer 1970. Judge Brown in the other Haywood County case in federal court refused to order Haywood County jury commissioners to include blacks on jury list in proportion to population. The judge refused to hold that blacks were systematically excluded from serving as jurors in Haywood County. Yet he did order commissioners to consult tax records, telephone directories and other reliable sources of names, in addition to voter registration records, in selecting jurors.

The School Board meeting of 15 December was attended by five members of a Haywood County Quarterly Court appointed committee, six NAACP members and four members of the present School Board. The composition of those present at the meeting demonstrated that times were changing and that Brownsville and Haywood County ultimately complied with court decisions. "There was agreement that the negro community should have representation on the Board and that the superintendent of education should be appointed by the Board" (19 December 1969). The involuntary integration of the school system in Haywood County, as elsewhere, led to the establishment of private schools, such as the Volunteer State Baptist Academy in Brownsville. Funds were found in traditional ways. On 4 September 1970, e.g. the announcement in the newspaper: "New Academy to Have Sale" caught the eye. "Sponsors of the Volunteer State Baptist Academy will conduct an 'Old Country Store' sale this Friday and Saturday in the downtown shopping center across from Kroger's . . . . Proceeds will go for needed supplies for the new school, which opens Sept. 8."

In December 1970 the Tennessee Academy, as it was also called, had a faculty of 14 with 283 students in grades one through ten and kindergarten. There were plans for further growth; by next fall grades 11 and 12 were to be added. Tuition was $ 400,- per year per student in the elementary grades and $ 500,- for high school students. The first graduation ceremonies at Tennessee Academy took place on 26 May 1972. Tennessee Academy had twenty-four seniors, while Haywood High School had two hundred and ninety. In 1973 twenty-seven students graduated from Tennessee Academy. At that time the school had approximately 400 students. Ultimately, however, the private school was to close and the modest number of Haywood countians wishing to attend private schools went to Jackson, which was twenty-seven miles away, or to more distant Memphis. The Tennessee Academy, which had been organized in an attempt to resist desegregation, failed because most white parents changed their minds about integration when they saw the newly

developed Haywood High School operating successfully.

School integration paved the way for further integration in the community. The appointment, for instance, reported on 9 September 1973, of Will Batchelor was an indication that Haywood County was steadily moving towards public integration. "For the first time in modern day history, a negro has been employed to serve as deputy sheriff of Haywood County," said a front page article in the *Brownsville States-Graphic*.

The local newspaper, then, covered the development towards integration of the black and white schools in city and county extensively. School integration was an aspect of the struggle for civil rights that concerned a large section of the community. In 1968, in the middle of the battle for integration, the *Brownsville States-Graphic* reported on the consequences of an event related to civil rights: the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The *Brownsville States-Graphic* reported on April 12, that the local unit of the Tennessee National Guard had been called to Memphis on March 28 to put an end to riots that had broken out after the civil rights march in Memphis. The unit stayed there until March 31. "On April 4, after the death of the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., Company B of the 230th Signal Battalion, composed of the headquarters unit in Brownsville and another in Alamo, were again rushed to Memphis."

During the early days of the Vietnam War, before civil rights became a major issue, the South was still predominantly associated with the Democrats.[113] In the 1960s the dividing line between the two political parties still had its roots in the Civil War. Therefore, the report in the *Brownsville States-Graphic* on 31 May 1968, "Negro Republicans Form Club for County Political Purposes" signified a development in Haywood County's race relations. The club's chairman, Aubrey J. Young hoped to create a strong two-party system in order to find political solutions for existing problems that otherwise would not go away.

For white Southerners the Republican party, since the Civil War, had been the party associated with the North. This explains why they all voted Democrat. The blacks who had registered to vote initially favored the Republican party. Ever since president Johnson introduced new legislation aimed at improving the quality of life for the colored population, however, many Democrats turned Republican in frustration.

The fight for civil rights in Brownsville and Haywood County, which had initially evolved round the eviction of black tenants following their registration for the vote or activities related to the civil rights movement, had started out as a local affair. Before long, however, it was something that could not be contained. The reason was that it was a matter that affected a far larger area. What was happening in the heart of the Tennessee delta was of national importance. Everywhere in the United States and particularly in the Southern states, where communities consisting of mixed white and black populations abounded, the changes

required by federal law were actively resisted. This, however, attracted the media to trouble spots. The press flocked to Haywood County and the news about developments in Brownsville and Haywood County was reported in Memphis, New Orleans and beyond. The incidents in Haywood County spread even further: television channels in Iowa, for instance, also reported on the situation. In another development the front page of the *States-Graphic* of 4 June 1965, stated that the "northern white trash" would soon be in Brownsville. Civil rights sympathizers from outside the South started to arrive in Brownsville to help advance the cause of the blacks.

The Columnists, 1960-1973

The *Brownsville States-Graphic* published a weekly column on subjects that mattered to its white readers in particular, until 1969; in the course of that year the paper's policy changed and from then on the subjects dealt with were meant to appeal to both its black and white readers. During the Vietnam War years the columnists featured in the paper were North Callahan, Thurman Sensing, and Ed Jones. North Callahan was a syndicated columnist whose column "This is New York" appeared in the *Brownsville States-Graphic* from 1960 through 1971. In 1969 Thurman Sensing introduced another column: "Sensing The News". Sensing was executive vice-president of the Southern States Industrial Council and his Southern conservatism permeated every page he wrote for the newspaper. The third columnist was Ed Jones, representative of the 8th District of Tennessee (D) who inaugurated a weekly column in the local newspaper in 1969.

I will discuss the contribution made by each of these columnists as they bear on my subject chronologically. I will therefore first examine North Callahan's columns, followed by Sensing's, although during 1969 - 1971 their comments appeared in the paper simultaneously. Finally, I will turn to the columns of Ed Jones.

North Callahan

North Callahan often turned to the past. On 8 July 1960, for example, reflecting on the Civil War, he first repeated the stereotypical expression that it was a war of brother fighting against brother, which he elaborated on by informing the readers that that "was the way it was with my grandfathers in Tennessee". He then went on to say that this had also happened this far north, citing the following example: "Elias and William Poole lie in adjacent graves just across the river in Springfield, New

Jersey. They were brothers, and Elias was a lieutenant in the Confederate artillery, while Bill was a Yankee private who was present at the Appomattox surrender." Until July 1960 the Northern veteran's grave was adorned with flowers each Memorial Day, whereas sticks would be piled on the one who had fought for the Southern cause, then burned. To find so much bitterness on such an issue in the North as late as 1960 was quite unusual. On 4 July 1960 a red geranium was placed on each grave, with a Confederate flag beside that of Elias and a new 50-star flag of the United States alongside that of William, symbolizing reconciliation.

On 1 March 1963 "This Is New York" returned to the subject of the Civil War to commemorate the battle of Vicksburg, Mississippi "a hundred years ago", again in a spirit of reconciliation: "On July 4th of this year, two men will visit Vicksburg . . . They are general U.S. Grant III and John C. Pemberton III, grandsons of the opposing commanders of the Union and Confederate forces there."

The election of Henry David Thoreau, who "died just a hundred years ago", to the Hall of Fame of New York University inspired a column on famous men of the past. Callahan characteristically turned to the nation's Civil War heroes and observed that Stonewall Jackson was recently elected and Jefferson Davis nominated to the NYU Hall of Fame. Robert E. Lee, he added, was already a member (27 April 1962).

In 1963 Callahan often turned nostalgically to the past. He welcomed the revival of an Ohio riverboat race. The organizers had remembered that in Mark Twain's opinion "a horse race was tame compared to that between riverboats".

> The Delta Queen and Belle of St. Louis, both sternwheelers, will race on the Ohio River, the first such contest in 35 years, and many Americans with a sense of history and romance will be there to witness the event - and they are to be envied. The most famous such race took place in 1870 between the Robert E. Lee and the Natchez between St. Louis and New Orleans. The Robert E. Lee won, as crowds along the way cheered the showboats on, and since then has been enshrined in song and story.

In the summer of 1965 (July 2) he noted that echoes of the Civil War Centennial were dying away. According to the New York column, by then Americans should have learned the lessons of that war. The column concluded that perhaps the best postscript could be seen on the sides of the trucks of a shipping line cleverly named *The Mason and Dixon Lines*, showing U.S. Grant shaking hands with Robert E. Lee and underneath the legend *Now joining the North and the South*.

The first time that Vietnam was mentioned in North Callahan's column was as a footnote to a meeting he had with Henry Cabot Lodge,

Jr., who was to become the American ambassador in Saigon (17 May 1963).

> About 15 years ago when we were both en route to England aboard the Queen Elizabeth, I had a nice visit with Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr. We had not been out of the World War II Army very long, both had the same rank, and I had written a history of the armed forces in which colonel Lodge was interested. He had taken an admirable step when he entered the war, voluntarily resigning as United States senator from Massachusetts to go on active duty as a reserve officer and take up the fight for his country . . . Recently major general Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr., - who has risen markedly as a reserve officer - visited the Pentagon and spent two weeks on active duty . . . The former ambassador [to the United Nations] went on to say it is impressive that when times get dark in Berlin, the president orders out the Army Reserve, or that when Communism threatens in Southeast Asia, Army personnel go to Vietnam.

Inadvertently, Cabot Lodge here laid bare one of the problems of the Vietnam War: during World War II, the National Guard and the Army Reserve took part in the fighting. This meant that, politically, the country was united and approved of government policy on the war. The National Guard and the Army Reserve were not called upon to fight in Vietnam, however. The explanation is that although the conflict developed into a fully fledged war, it remained undeclared; the Johnson administration did not go to the American people to set out government policy. As the war escalated, Americans lost faith in the government. If the war was going well, why was it necessary to send an increasing number of troops to Vietnam? Callahan's suggestion that America could lose the Vietnam War (12 March, 1965) should be seen against this background. It was uttered in a mood of frustration caused by a lack of trust in the Johnson administration. The idea that America could lose the war was immediately qualified as follows: "Although this should probably be mentioned with one's fingers crossed, we have never lost a war. In our present perplexity over the situation in South Viet Nam, it is heartening to see Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, a symbol of our survival in a time of dark misfortune." (Valley Forge is where the Army of the newly formed United States of America was encamped from 19 December 1777 to 19 June 1778 under the command of general George Washington).

Callahan reacted critically to the student protests against the War in Vietnam on June 11, 1965. "Among students I have noticed that there is a considerable amount of sentiment against our fighting in Vietnam. Plausible arguments are presented, facts related, comparisons made to earlier wars in which we have become entangled, and many angles

brought up which might be convincing if one were inclined to listen only to youthful exuberance. Yet I note that most such arguments come from those who are eligible for the draft." The readers of the *Brownsville States-Graphic* agreed with Callahan's analysis. The students' reasoning was interesting as an intellectual exercise, but the bottomline was that when your country called you went. What was wrong with the students was that they did not want to fight for their country. This, at least, is how the local people felt about it.

The reports about casualties from the Vietnam War front in 1966 were put in perspective by a World War I veteran listening to a young man who was relating excitedly the results of a recent battle. The elderly veteran said that the U.S. Army was more experienced and had much better weapons than in 1917 when the initial thought was that war was a glorified picnic. But he had found out the hard way: "There is nothing nice about war, you know. You think 83 men is a lot to lose in one fight. Why in the battle of Verdun one million men were killed before it was over." On a surface level the outcome of such an incongruous comparison, to the readers of the local newspaper at the time, was that the War in Vietnam was not going so bad after all. The idea of America losing the war was gone.

Callahan again focused on the problems of young men who tried to stay away from Vietnam on 23 September. In the early years of the war students would automatically be deferred on condition they did well in their studies. According to the New York column, "Now that schools are resuming, the military status of the young men is uppermost in many minds." On the campus of George Williams College, for instance, there is a sign all too remindful of this. It says, "Study each day or you may become 1A." Another sign of the times: "There are only three college grades now: A, B and Viet Nam."

On the first day of the New Year, North Callahan continued the themes of the Civil War and Vietnam. He listed some of the things president Johnson and all Americans could look forward to: "the end of the Civil War Centennial celebration...hopefully a turning of the bad fortunes in Vietnam where we are certainly in a war, if not undeclared . . . "[114]

North Callahan frequently showed a sense of humor. Many of his columns contained funny stories about widely different subjects, including the draft during the Vietnam War and the Civil War. On 6 January 1967, for example, he wrote: "During his first winter in northern Vermont, a tourist remarked to an old farmer about the great number of Civil War memorials in the area. Every little village seemed to have a statue dedicated to a veteran of that conflict. 'Yes,' the old man replied. 'Vermont sent a large[r] percentage of her boys off to the Civil War than any other state in the Union. Yup, anything to get South for the winter.'"

Thurman Sensing

Whereas North Callahan tended to focus mainly on history, Thurman Sensing was primarily concerned with the here and now in the South. His first contribution was on civil disobedience (28 April 1967). He reported on Stokely Carmichael speaking at Vanderbilt University, Nashville. (Carmichael made the phrase "Black Power" famous. He was critical of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s peaceful approach. He was arrested as a Freedom Rider in 1961 and spent seven weeks in a Mississippi jail for violation of segregation laws. Stokely Carmichael became the chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) in 1966. When he denounced U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War, his passport was confiscated). Callahan wrote: "Following his inflammatory talk, this Tennessee city . . . was torn by riots. . . Roaring marauders, many of them screaming 'black power' struck through a 30-block area, shooting, looting, destroying cars and trucks and setting fire to stores with flaming Molotov cocktails." Sensing strongly objected to Carmichael's provocative language to the student body, "Refuse to serve in Viet Nam". The students' response was, "Hell no, [we] won't go." The debate on Vietnam was continued in an article entitled "Westmoreland's Impact" (12 May 1967). General William C. Westmoreland appeared before the Congress and the American Newspapers Publishers Association and conveyed the feelings of the soldiers in Vietnam, who were disturbed by what they saw as unpatriotic acts of demonstrators against the struggle in the Far East. Westmoreland's strong and confident performance effectively counterbalanced the Johnson administration's credibility gap. The senators "who are making careers of being 'doves', J.W. Fulbright (D-Ark.) Robert F. Kennedy (D-N.Y) and Charles Percy (R-Ill.)", came in for severer criticism than the demonstrators, because their attitude was beneficial to the enemy, he argued.

All over the United States, in California, New Hampshire, Kentucky, and South Carolina civil disobedience was on the rise (26 May 1967). "A band of ruffians who call themselves Black Panthers knocked over sergeants at arms and invaded the California legislature while it was in session." At Dartmouth College governor George Wallace of Alabama, who had been invited to speak, was forced off the speaking platform, while in Kentucky demonstrators threatened to disrupt the Kentucky Derby. At the University of South Carolina demonstrators interrupted the ceremony during which general Westmoreland received an honorary degree. The atmosphere of the nationwide demonstrations against the War in Vietnam, as Thurman Sensing saw them, emerged clearly from the column "Storming the Pentagon" (17 November 1967). Conservatives such as Thurman Sensing, had an innate mistrust of communism: all anti-war and anti-government demonstrations had been carefully plotted by communists, they opined.

> The horde of anti-Vietnam demonstrators that invaded the nation's capital Oct. 21 and attempted to storm the Pentagon could have been visitors from another planet. To those who saw the demonstrators close up, the mob of protesters was indeed a strange and disturbing sight. Many of the male marchers had long hair and were attired in beatnik or hippie costumes. In the line of march were individuals with Vietcong flags or buttons proclaiming their hatred of the United States. One of the marchers openly termed the president of the United States the real enemy. In an excess of tolerance [the government] permitted the demonstrators to swarm across government property, to carry their Vietcong flags up to the Lincoln Memorial, and, in a variety of ways, to paralyze large areas of the nation's capital . . . . There should be no misunderstanding of the meaning of the Oct. 21 demonstration around the Pentagon. It was a dry run, which enabled the communists to test their ability to disrupt the capital of the United States . . . The assault group of demonstrators, which initially overran a thin line of defending marshals and soldiers at entrance No. 7 to the Pentagon, were using railroad flares in a regular assault operation. What the public needs to appreciate is that the anti-Vietnam demonstrators . . . are conducting war from within. They are working hand-in-hand with Ho Chi Minh in North Vietnam and his Russian supporters. It is noteworthy that Ho Chi Minh sent a message of sympathy to the demonstrators in Washington. Around the world, communist front groups coordinated sympathy marches.

Sensing continued his rightwing reporting when he criticized the World Council of Churches. He viewed the organization as a mask for political activity: its president, the Rev. Dr. Martin Niemöller had been awarded the Lenin Prize. "Americans will recall that last year Dr. Niemöller went to North Vietnam and fiercely condemned the United States for its aerial attacks on Ho Chi Minh's bastion."

In "Real State of the Union", (9 February 1968) president Johnson was accused of not giving the American people the needed data on the state of the nation's affairs. The only thing the president had said about Vietnam was that the American will to persevere would not be broken. Thurman Sensing: "What he failed to say is that the United States will move with determination to win a victory over the forces of communism that are taking so many American lives and so much of our national wealth. Missing from the address was a clear-cut statement of a victory goal . . . ." On 29 March 1968 the White House came under attack again for its apparent lack of a winning strategy for the War in Vietnam. The situation in fact looked grim. At Khe San American fighting men were in a siege position along the Demilitarized Zone. "They are being bled

mercilessly by troops that emerge from the still privileged sanctuaries of the communists."

President Nixon would have to get the country out of the mess into which it was plunged by presidents Kennedy and Johnson. Thurman Sensing thought that the negotiations in Paris would benefit from a renewal of U.S. air and sea bombardment of North Vietnam. "The Nixon administration . . . has an opportunity to remind the American people and the world that the only language the communists understand is the language of force." President Johnson had made a mistake when he halted the bombing at a time when it was doing the most good and the communists were really hurting.

Liberals insisted on saying that the cold war was over, "But that's a cruel joke on the 500,000 Americans fighting in Vietnam" (8 November 1967). The Vietnamese war effort was continued by a massive Soviet sealift to Haiphong and because of Soviet air defense missiles and anti-aircraft artillery sent to North Vietnam. "If that is not evidence of cold war - or hot war - it is hard to see what the Great Society dreamers want as evidence."

The increasing campus disorders all over the country were noted and commented on in the spring of 1969 (4 April 1969). The situation at San Francisco State University had deteriorated to such an extent that virtual guerrilla warfare was in progress. At the campus of the University of California at Berkeley a large contingent of riot police was on stand by. But that was not the whole story. Trouble was taking place or brewing at a wide range of institutions, ranging from new urban colleges to famous old universities.

During these turbulent years when the War in Vietnam was gradually reaching its climax, the civil rights struggle within the continental United States was having a noticeable impact on everyday life. The Vietnam War and the fight for civil rights coincided and mutually influenced each other. A visible sign of change was that a "black" mathematics course was taught at Federal City College, while new professors were being recruited, not on the basis of academic credentials but on their records of involvement with black power groups.

Thurman Sensing approvingly reported on the measure taken by the Louisiana State University Board of Supervisors against the Students for A Democratic Society (4 July 1969). The SDS was formed in 1962. According to Thurman Sensing it was the spearhead of revolutionary action from coast to coast. In the early years of its existence the SDS had no difficulty in finding a campus on which to hold its annual national convention, but in 1969 it was turned down by thirty-seven colleges and universities and at least twenty-five meeting halls, parks, and camps. The Board of Louisiana State University effectively banned the SDS from all campuses within the LSU system. At Harvard and Yale, however, SDS spokesmen were allowed to speak, although the speaker at Harvard was removed from the platform for pouring abuse on the United States. At

Yale a member of the graduating class, Sensing complained, rejected America's involvement in the Vietnam War. At the same time "no one was given an opportunity to speak in behalf of the Yale alumni proudly serving in Vietnam or who rendered loyal service to their country in past wars in defense of freedom." A hardening of attitudes clearly showed.

The Vietnam Moratorium (the stoppage of school and college classes) and other "Vietnik" demonstrations, according to Sensing, did not merely aim at immediate American withdrawal from Vietnam. Its ultimate objective was the defeat and humiliation of the United States (24 October 1969). He commented on the Kent State tragedy in his weekly column on 22 May 1970: while leftists and liberals in the United States and elsewhere saw the students killed at Kent State as heroic workers for peace, he considered them an ugly and brutal mob engaged in transforming a university into a scene of anarchy and bloodshed. Sensing felt the time was past for half-way measures. The country was on the verge of crisis; therefore, every effort should be exerted to crush the criminal leftists who sought to paralyze the country.

The sectional bias at the root of Sensing's politics can be clearly discerned. In October 1967 he wrote:

> When Stokely Carmichael was raising the roof earlier this summer, triggering violence around the country, Mr. Clark and his associates apparently could not find a law to cover his un-American activities. When the South was going through some turmoil a decade ago, the Justice Department always seemed able to find some obscure post-Civil War statute that effectively shut up people the Department did not favor. Now that the Black Power movement is busy burning cities and causing r[i]ots, the Department is strangely helpless.

An interesting word here is post-Civil War. The legacy of the defeat of the South was still having an effect, he suggested. The positive discrimination that transpires from Sensing's article also harbors implied criticism of president Johnson, who was strongly disliked by many white Southerners.

Unfortunately, according to Sensing, there were elements in the nation with a profound sectional bias against the South who wished to punish it for not taking the ultra-liberal tack. Thus school systems in the South were treated unfairly by being ordered to meet disruptive and virtually impossible timetables which were not imposed elsewhere in the nation. Several Southern governors therefore pleaded for equal justice, saying that if one type of school system was to be made mandatory for the South, the same system should be ordered for Massachusetts, Illinois, California and the other states. Sensing felt that, economically, ever since the end of the Civil War, the South had lagged behind the rest of the

nation. In his treatment of this and other subjects in his weekly column, he showed himself to be a conservative, white, Southerner. It was what he had in common with the predominantly white readership of the *Brownsville States-Graphic*.

Ed Jones

The "Reports from Washington" column (commencing in the course of 1969) by Ed Jones was very different from Callahan's or Sensing's columns. Subjects were closer to home and focused on the concerns of the Congressman's constituents in Haywood County. Thus on 31 October 1969, when Jones discussed the draft, he showed sympathy with the young men confronted with it.

> More young people of our district have expressed to me their concern with the draft law than with any other issue. They feel almost unanimously that our present system is not quite fair. They do not object to serving their country - they know someone has to do it - but they are deeply disturbed over the method of selecting who will serve and who will not. From the day a boy has his eighteenth birthday until he is twenty-six, he is liable to the draft. If he is deferred during this seven-year period, he becomes liable until he is thirty-five . . . . Whether a young man is drafted or not often depends on where he lives and the policy followed by his local Draft Board.

Jones went on to explain that other than in World War II when the military needed every man they could get, the country now had more young men than it needed. Hence, there was a draft law with loopholes. "And it is understandable that our young men resent this." While agreeing that the American forces should have all the men they needed, he felt that the nation had an obligation to make the draft "as fair to our young men as we know how". On 9 July 1971, "Reports from Washington" again focused on the draft. Jones reported that he had voted against the Nedzi-Whalen amendment to the military draft law, because it would have bound the United States to withdraw all of its troops from Vietnam by a specified date. The cost of the War in Vietnam in human life by the summer of 1971 had very nearly reached its climax. "Over fifty thousand of our young men have already died in this conflict." Although reluctant "to see one more of our boys give his life in Vietnam", he felt that it would be a mistake for the U.S. to bind itself to a withdrawal date, because there were at least 1,600 servicemen listed as missing in action or

held prisoner in North Vietnam.

In a philosophical mood Jones discussed Veterans Day (1971) and the veterans of America's past wars. Distinguishing between the return of the veterans of World Wars I and II - "those were times of great jubilation" - and the return of "our boys from Korea" which was not quite the same sort of occasion because of the nature of that war's end, he went on to ask the question that was on the minds of many young men, their friends, and family:

> What awaits the young man who in the future will be coming home from Vietnam? He will find his nation divided over the issue of the war in that distant land. He will find his nation in the midst of an emotional, sometimes violent debate over its future course in that war. Sadly, he will find a nation so involved in discussing the overall conflict that it may have overlooked the sacrifices he has made. In fact, many of our returning Vietnam veterans already have met with this attitude.

Without going into U.S. Vietnam policy, Ed Jones argued that Americans should honor American servicemen who fought in the undeclared war. His words suggested that he knew what the people of Brownsville and Haywood County thought of the war and the local soldiers who still were or had been part of it.

> It is not necessary for us to endorse Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon's foreign policy to appreciate the efforts of these fighting men. On this Veterans Day, I urge everyone to seek out our boys who have served in Vietnam and let them know that we understand and appreciate the sacrifices they have made.

In the spring of 1971 Washington D.C. was flooded by demonstrators, who attracted attention by their method of staging mock battles in conspicuous places and sit downs at the Justice Department and at the Capitol (14 May 1971). They tried to bring Washington traffic to a standstill. The disruptive demonstration had an immediate effect on the bill that placed a 31 December 1971 deadline on the withdrawal of all U.S. troops from Vietnam. A congressman from the Midwest informed Ed Jones that he had almost made up his mind to vote for the bill. But now, he said, he was afraid that such a vote would associate him, in the minds of his constituents, with the disrupters who tried "to shut down our national government". Clearly, Jones was aware of the complexity of the issues, in contrast to Sensing.

On 2 February 1973 "Reports from Washington" elaborated on

president Nixon's peace announcement on the night of 23 January 1973.

> When the war had finally come to an end, all of Washington gave a sigh of relief. The effect of the Vietnam War on America at this point was quite significant. The war tested the strength of the nation's fiber and strained every traditional institution from universities to Veterans Day. The television pictures of dead bodies every night had hardened our compassion for suffering. Strong men had died in the unpopular war because their country had asked them to fight. Others had left the U.S., severing family ties and a way of life, because their consciences told them to.

Ed Jones, as indicated before, focused on the subjects that were of immediate concern to his constituents. In effect his columns can be regarded as open letters or public answers to private questions. In the 1960s congressman Jones received many letters from young constituents who worried about the draft, but people of all ages wrote to him on the other subject that frustrated many people at the time: the forced way to put an end to racial imbalance in schools. The decision of the U.S. Supreme Court to uphold the practice of school busing in order to achieve a racial balance in Mecklenberg County, North Carolina, gave a green light to this practice all over the South (18 June 1971). "Southern people, by and large, are law abiding people, both blacks and whites. For this reason we have moved to desegregate our schools. However, in other parts of the country, the trend has been toward segregation. For example the public schools in Washington, D.C., are now almost totally black, while many of the schools in the surrounding areas are almost totally white, in spite of the 1954 court decision. The same trend is evident in many of the large northern cities," argued Jones. Since he took office the congressman had received thousands of letters that voiced objections against busing. He, too, felt it was wrong to force certain school children against their will to ride buses to schools out of their own neighborhoods.

The three columnists of the *Brownsville States-Graphic:* North Callahan, Thurman Sensing and Ed Jones, informed the local people of Brownsville and Haywood County about subjects of national and international importance. They wrote in particular about the things that Southerners were interested in: the Civil War centennial celebrations, the civil rights movement, and the Vietnam War. An important issue related to the Vietnam War was the draft, which was especially dealt with by Ed Jones, who, of the three columnists, was closest to the people of Brownsville and Haywood County. As their representative he knew the city and the county, and more important, the people he represented and their concerns.

Summing up, we find that between 1960 and 1973 there were very

different columnists who found their way into the paper of Brownsville and Haywood County, Tennessee. In the 1960s North Callahan sent his columns focusing on the Confederate past from distant New York City. Columns airing conservative views followed on current developments in the South by the Southerner Thurman Sensing in the late 1960s. In the same period Ed Jones wrote comments on political developments in Washington D.C. as they affected the people of West Tennessee, whose representative he was. Each of them represented a particular strain of Southern white sensibility.

With Our Servicemen

In the early 1960s, at the start of the conflict in Southeast Asia, the servicemen who went to Vietnam were few and far between. News about these men was reported in individual articles. The "With Our Servicemen" column first appeared in the paper on 11 August 1967. By then, the increasing number and frequency of news items about local servicemen merited a weekly column. The information reported in "With Our Servicemen" was received from the military authorities, many of which are traditionally based in the South.

"With Our Servicemen" appeared in the *Brownsville States-Graphic* during the years when the Vietnam War called for massive troop movements (1967-1971), which also affected Brownsville and Haywood County. The frequency of news items about local servicemen received by the newspaper from the Military, led to the introduction of this special column, which exclusively reported on local soldiers involved in the Vietnam War. The advantage of having a special column for news about Haywood Countians in Vietnam was obvious. Readers could check the column at a glance. The importance of the column is that it chronicled the Vietnam record of the servicemen of Brownsville and Haywood County from 11 August 1967 to 17 December 1971.

In language and style the "With Our Servicemen" column differed from other articles about local servicemen in the newspaper. The column contained very brief news items, stating the event that was newsworthy, detailed information about the branch of the Armed Services which the serviceman was part of, his age (usually), and his home address or that of his parents. For example, "Pleiku, Vietnam - Army specialist four George W. Bowers, 20, son of Mr. and Mrs. Martin Bowers, Route 5, Somerville, Tenn., was assigned as a mortarman in Troop C, 2nd Squadron of the 4th Infantry Division's 1st Calvary [=Cavalry] Regiment near Pleiku, Vietnam, Nov.20. Specialist Bowers' wife, Laura Jean lives on Route 4, Brownsville." The *Brownsville States-Graphic* printed the news it received from the Military verbatim in its "With Our Servicemen"

column. The standardized texts of the items in the column point to the fact that thousands of such texts were written by a military source and sent on to the home communities of the servicemen concerned. A comparison of the news items in the "With Our Servicemen" column over the years shows no noticeable change in language or style. Articles written about local soldiers not published in the "With Our Servicemen" column were different in language and style. A passage from the article written about corporal Mike Turner's return home in January 1968 makes this clear:

> Corporal Turner flew from Da Nang to Okinawa and on into El Toro, Calif. His parents had been "sitting by" the telephone for days, awaiting his call, and when it came, they immediately drove to Memphis Metropolitan Airport to welcome their son.

Instead of the detached, factual, clipped, military style of reporting, the front page article about the return to his home town of Mike Turner is a human interest story, focusing on the return of a son whose return had been hanging in the balance.

For various reasons, then, the local newspaper was a mix of widely different linguistic styles. It is important, however, to note that throughout the 1960s and early 1970s, the majority of the articles printed in the local newspaper were written in an informal style and language. The columns and articles written by military sources and syndicated journalists found in the *Brownsville States-Graphic* show off the newspaper's own use of language to good advantage.

As said before the historical explanation for the proportionally large number of armed services installations in the Southern states is that during the colonial wars the main contenders acted on the conviction that control of the Southern coast lines and rivers was essential.[115] Many forts date from that time. After the War of Independence the United States further fortified the Southern coasts. Montgomery, for example, had five military companies in 1885, when its population was less than 25,000.[116] The Southern martial spirit and tradition further appear from the statistics of West Point and Annapolis. In 1910, 93 percent of U.S. Army general officers had Southern affiliations.[117]

As American military power increased in the course of the twentieth century, the need arose for more and larger military installations. The favorable climate was a decisive factor in Washington's choice for the South.[118] The first special warfare groups to go to Vietnam in 1961 were the army's Green Berets from Fort Bragg, situated in North Carolina. This did not come as a surprise.[119] Perhaps one of the main reasons why so many Southerners, and the people of Brownsville and Haywood

County are no exception, choose a military career today is that in a predominantly agricultural region, there are few career opportunities. For blacks and poor whites a military career is attractive. The incentives of a military career are an opportunity to see the world. It offers excellent medical care and early retirement. Thus Webb Banks, the mayor of Brownsville today, is a retired Air Force colonel, while another resident, colonel Russell Taliaferro is a retired (test) pilot and air base commander.

Sociologist Morris Janowitz found in 1950 and 1971 that officers with Southern affiliations of birth, schooling, or marriage continued to be represented disproportionately in America's military.[120] He also established that during the Vietnam War, "when there was a national backlash against the military", ROTC remained a popular choice on campuses in the South. Janowitz pointed out that the Southern small-town armories and American Legion posts functioned as social clubs for old boys. This was precisely the situation found in Brownsville, Tennessee, during the years of the Vietnam War.

My research of the *Brownsville States-Graphic* shows that the first reference made to Haywood County servicemen in connection with Vietnam, was on November 5, 1965. During the years of the conflict in Southeast Asia the total number of times servicemen were reported in the newspaper in connection with Vietnam amounted to one hundred and thirty-three. The final item in this context was published on February 16, 1973.

Vietnam veterans were younger on average by seven years than their World War II counterparts.[121] Christy Smith, whom I met in Brownsville in 1986 and again in 1995, served as a Red Cross volunteer in one of the hospitals in Japan, where wounded soldiers were flown in straight from the battlefield in Vietnam. She remarked that almost all of the severely wounded soldiers "were so young". Most servicemen from Brownsville and Haywood County were between twenty and twenty-three years old when they were sent to Vietnam. Sometimes they were only nineteen: Marine lance corporal A.C. Greer, Jr., for example, and Army private first class Leburn D. Barnes.

The "With Our Servicemen" columns during the most intense years of the Vietnam War (1967-1970) mention a large number of young local servicemen. Many local servicemen in Vietnam were career men. Records show that out of 111 servicemen that served in Vietnam, sixty-one were drafted by local Draft Board No. 41, but fifty were career men, volunteered, or joined elsewhere. Careers would be advanced by active service in a war zone. For that reason career servicemen were eager to be part of the war effort. Colonel Russell Taliaferro, for instance, told the author in an interview that he was at West Point during the end of World War II but graduated too late to fight in it. He was quick to volunteer for the Korean War, however, where he flew 125 missions as a fighter pilot. During 1966-1967 he served as an advisor to the Vietnamese Air Force, and as such flew 84 combat missions in Vietnam.

Colonel Webb F. Banks is another example of a career officer who welcomed the war as an opportunity to show his professionalism. The *Brownsville States-Graphic* reported in March 1969 that major Webb F. Banks, a career soldier from Haywood County, had completed a tour of duty in Vietnam. Webb Banks, who was promoted to lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Air Force in 1972, was elected mayor of Brownsville and has held the position to the present day (October 2001). His career followed a typically Southern pattern, starting in the ROTC while he was at college. As a 2nd lieutenant he specialized in supply and logistics in the Air Force. In 1966, while stationed in France, he was sent straight to Vietnam to set up Phu Cat Air Base, situated on the 14th parallel. It was the largest air base set up in South Vietnam. Phu Cat was in the Korean sector, which meant that the Koreans, "who were tough fighters", protected it. To illustrate this point, mayor Banks told the author in an interview (Cf. chapter 3) that he remembered the Vietcong attacking the Korean base, which could be clearly seen from the American position. "[The Koreans] shot about seven [Vietcong]. And they were on the wire. They would not remove the men from the wire. And, of course, this was totally adverse to us. Finally, our medics went over to the base and asked them to move them and they did, but they had a different outlook on life than we did." Mayor Banks stressed the difference between officers like himself and the men who were drafted. He felt a professional; for him the war was a chance to see if he could really do what he had been trained for. All the officers around him felt the same. He also emphasized that in 1966-1967 they were "on the uphill" and morale was good. They all had a sense of accomplishment when the planes came in on April 17 and flew a mission, after Banks and his men had worked twenty-four hours a day from January onwards to complete the air base. Mayor Banks claimed that Vietnam had been a good experience.

Throughout the war years the newspaper reported on the heroism of the men deployed in the theater of war in Southeast Asia. "With Our Servicemen", for instance, reported that Army sergeant Nathaniel Boyd (21), of 1001 E. Jefferson St., Brownsville, took part in Operation Pershing in Vietnam "with other members of the 1st Air Calvary [=Cavalry] Division (24 November 1967). During the search and clear operation, he had been engaged in dragging the VC from their vast network of tunnels and bunkers." The tunnels were especially concentrated in the Iron Triangle region and near Cu Chi. They were one meter high by 0.75 meters wide.[122] Entering tunnels to look for the enemy carried a high risk, which was well recognized, and explains why the so-called Tunnel Rats received extra hazard pay.[123] The exchange of letters between congressman Ed Jones and SP/4 Max A. Nash, who wrote from Vietnam to ask for a Tennessee state flag so that his state might be represented at his duty station, is another example of the patriotic tone found in the *Brownsville States-Graphic*.

The weekly news about Haywood Countians in Vietnam in the local

newspaper regularly featured promotions earned by the soldiers while they were away in Southeast Asia. In the 10 October 1966 issue, for instance, it was reported that James R.L. Hay (23), of Route 3, Brownsville, had been promoted to Army specialist fourth class in Phu Lam. William F. Allen was promoted to Army staff sergeant in August near Qui Nhon (22 September 1967). Marine lance corporal Ernest R. Norvell of Route 2, Bells, was "promoted to his present rank" while serving with the 11th Motor Transport Battalion in Vietnam (20 October 1967). Clarence A. Porch III, "whose parents live on Route 3, Brownsville", was promoted to Army sergeant in May, while assigned to the 4th Infantry Division in Vietnam (21 June 1968). Archie D. Williamson (22), of Route 1, Stanton, was promoted to Army sergeant near Saigon (15 August 1969). Later that year the *Brownsville States-Graphic* reported that Marine sergeant Gary K. Brookshire from Memphis, the husband of the former Miss Jane L. Lominac of Route 2, Ripley, had been promoted "to his present rank while serving with the First Marine Aircraft Wing in Vietnam" (3 October 1969). Later, in January 1970, it was reported that Marine lance corporal Fletcher R. Parrish, "husband of Mrs. William B. Parrish of Route 3, Ripley, was promoted to his present rank while serving with the First Marine Division in Vietnam;" Marine corporal James W. Woodland, Route 1, Stanton, "was promoted to his present rank while serving with the First Marine Aircraft Wing in the northernmost provinces of Vietnam" (19 June 1970). On 30 July 1971, the local newspaper carried the following standard "With Our Servicemen" item:

> Chu Lai, Vietnam. Lonnie L. Landreth, 21, . . . recently was promoted to Army specialist four, near Chu Lai, Vietnam. He is serving as a radio operator in Battery C, 1st Battalion of the 23rd Infantry Division's 82nd Artillery.

Despite its brevity, the news item provided the soldier's family and friends, and the community back in the US with important and interesting information. The significant part played by an individual soldier in the war was recognized.

"With Our Servicemen" also informed the local community where the soldiers from Haywood County were deployed and how they were occupied. On 11 August 1967, for example, it was reported that Airman Apprentice Aaron D. King was serving with Patrol Squadron Nine, homebased at Moffett Field, California. Many members of VP-9 completed a tour of duty in Vietnam. They were instrumental in preventing infiltration of enemy supplies and troops into South Vietnam. To do this, squadron aircraft patrolled the coastal waters of South Vietnam and the Gulf of Tonkin.

At first sight it is surprising that several servicemen from such a landlocked state as Tennessee served with the US Navy. Yet, it should be remembered that there was a naval base at nearby Millington, Tennessee. Another explanation, offered by Ray Dixon from Brownsville is that Navy recruiters were very active at Haywood High School. This explains why the local newspaper's report on 25 October 1968 did not seem unusual when it referred to electrician's mate first class McLennan (29), the son of Mrs. Hattie M. McLennan of 701 Hatchie Ave., Brownsville, as serving aboard the destroyer USS Blandy in the Gulf of Tonkin.

The servicemen from Brownsville and Haywood County were deployed throughout South Vietnam, from the Mekong Delta to the northernmost provinces, occupied with a vast array of tasks, ranging from cook or steward to rifleman or mortarman. In a number of cases the "With Our Servicemen" column in the *Brownsville States-Graphic* mentioned that local men were in Vietnam, or were headed there, sometimes indicating their Division, sometimes not. The *Brownsville States-Graphic* also reported news about servicemen from other counties or states, who qualified as local through their marriage to local women. Thus, on 27 December 1968 it was reported that U.S. Air Force captain Edward J. Conrad, Jr., son of Mr. and Mrs. J. Conrad of 4036 Baskel, Memphis, had completed his 100th combat mission in Southeast Asia. Captain Conrad's wife, the former Benita Reeves, was from Brownsville.

The professional soldiers, who were sons of Brownsville and Haywood County, were not mentioned in the "With Our Servicemen" column, because they had lived out of state for quite some time before they went to Vietnam. The events marking their careers, including their tour of duty in Vietnam, were reported elsewhere in the local newspaper.

Hierarchy in the military is based on rank. Medals, however, constitute a secondary type of hierarchy. Within this seconday hierarchical structure it is especially those medals that can be earned in time of war that mean more than anything. The validity of this point was demonstrated in May 1996 when Admiral Jeremy M. Boorda died of a self-inflicted gunshot wound, hours before he was to have met with *Newsweek*'s bureau chief in his Pentagon office to discuss questions about his Vietnam combat medals. *Newsweek* was investigating whether Admiral Boorda had worn a combat "V" decoration that he was never officially awarded. Ironically, it was later (June 1998) confirmed by the civilian head of the Navy that Admiral Boorda had been entitled to wear the two Vietnam-era combat decorations for valor that were challenged just before his death. The chief of naval operations during the Vietnam War, Elmo Zumwalt, Jr., asserted that it had been "appropriate, justified and proper" for the Admiral to attach the small bronze combat Vs to the ribbons on his uniform.

During the war, the "With Our Servicemen" column in the *Brownsville States-Graphic* provided detailed information about the medals conferred on local servicemen in connection with their service in

Vietnam. Thus, it was reported in October 1967 that major Webb F. Banks, of Route 5, Brownsville, had received his second award of the U.S. Air Force Commendation Medal at Phu Cat AB, Vietnam. Later that same month Marine major William L. Ball, son of Mr. and Mrs. Irvin F. Ball, of Route 1, Gates, was awarded his fifth Air Medal. He earned the award for outstanding achievement in aerial flight and for courage and devotion to duty in the face of hazardous flying conditions while serving with the First Marine Aircraft Wing in Vietnam (27 October 1967). Bronze Star Medals were received by Army staff sergeant James M. Mize, for outstanding meritorious service in combat operations against hostile forces in Vietnam from January 1967 to January 1968, and Army specialist four George W. Bowers, Route 5, Somerville, who received his award near Pleiku, Vietnam (24 May 1968). On 2 August 1968 the column reported that Army sergeant Harry E. Walton, Route 1, Gates, Tennessee, had received the Army Commendation Medal in Vietnam on June 11, 1968, for heroism in action while engaged in ground operations against a hostile force in Vietnam. A typical instance of such reporting is the following, concerning SP/4 Charles R. Simmons, who was awarded the Army Commendation Medal for heroism in connection with military operations against a hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam (28 August 1970). Specialist Four Simmons on 2 March 1970 had been serving as a Rifle Team Leader with Company D, 2nd Battalion, 1st Infantry. At that point in time

> the company was in a night defense position west of Tam Ky when it came under a mortar attack by an unknown size enemy force. With complete disregard for his personal safety, Specialist Simmons led his gun crew through the barrage of hostile mortar rounds to a strategic position where he directed them in engaging the insurgents. Repeatedly exposing himself to the concentration of enemy rounds, Specialist Simmons skillfully directed his gun crew in placing 90 MM recoilless rifle rounds onto the hostile emplacements until they were completely silenced. Through his timely actions, Specialist Simmons was highly instrumental in thwarting the determined enemy attack. His personal heroism and devotion to duty are in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service, and reflect great credit upon himself, the American Division, and the United States Army.

The *Brownsville States-Graphic* reported the news it received from the Military about medals received by local servicemen for a variety of feats and achievements. What the paper did not report on was the frustration felt by family members, who in vain attempted to get a posthumous medal for their loved ones who had died in Vietnam.[124]

"With Our Servicemen" news items about departures for Vietnam were few and far between. The transfer from the training facility to Vietnam was not routinely reported. It cannot be established whether this was caused by inconsistencies in the flow of information from the military authorities or not, but it was the newspaper's policy, so I was informed, to publish every available news item on the local servicemen. An example of such reporting occurs in December 1967 when the paper contained the news that Pvt. Harold Marlar, had completed his jungle training at Camp Campbell, Kentucky and had now left for Vietnam. In August 1970 it was reported that Lonnie Lynn Landreth left for Vietnam, after a 14-day leave spent in Stanton with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Landreth. Similarly, though the return of local servicemen from Vietnam was not reported regularly by the "With Our Servicemen" column, the return of sergeant James Emerson after two years service in Vietnam (5 December 1969) was reported on. Later, in August 1970, followed the news that sergeant George E. Duncan, son of Mr. and Mrs. G.O. Duncan of Somerville (formerly of Haywood County) had returned home after a year's tour of duty in Vietnam. The first Haywood County soldier to return from Vietnam was captain Jack Banks who, on 17 June 1966 was reported back by the paper from a year at Qui Nhon, two hundred miles north of Saigon.

Compared to the early stages of the war when the information on local servicemen focused on their responsibilities and the units they served in, the typical news in 1971 was about promotions and medals received. After the withdrawal of American troops from Vietnam, the predominance of Vietnam in the "With Our Servicemen" diminished. Career soldiers were reported to be deployed in Korea, after a tour of duty in Vietnam. For example,

> OSAN-NI, Republic of Korea, master sergeant Dewitt C. Webb, Jr., son of Mrs. D.C. Webb, Sr. of 1119 Watkins St., has arrived for duty at Osan AB, Republic of Korea.
>
> Sergeant Webb is an air freight supervisor with a unit of the Pacific Air Forces, headquarters for air operations in Southeast Asia, the Far East and Pacific area. He previously served in Vietnam.
>
> The sergeant is a 1950 graduate of Jackson High School and his wife is the former Joan Mellere.

As suddenly as the "With Our Servicemen" column with news items about local servicemen going to or serving in Vietnam had started in the course of 1967, so abruptly did it cease in 1971. The Vietnam War continued for another two years, but due to the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Vietnam the "With Our Servicemen" was discontinued.

As said before the local newspaper published every news item about the local men in Vietnam that it received from the Military. Consequently, relatives, friends, and other readers were kept informed about the soldiers' progress. The local newspaper played a key role in keeping the community together. All sorts of activities initiated with a view to keeping in touch with Haywood Countians serving in Vietnam, and sponsored by the Red Cross, the churches, and the local schools, were published by the *Brownsville States-Graphic*. In response the soldiers in Vietnam sent letters to the editor, or to a son or daughter still at school in Brownsville, answering questions about Vietnam. These letters were published in the paper. The unifying part played by the local newspaper during the years of the Vietnam War was as obvious as it was important.

On Local Servicemen

Earlier I have examined discussions on Vietnam on the front page of the *Brownsville States-Graphic*. In this section I will focus on articles about Haywood countians in Vietnam, printed on inside pages. The articles are of a rich variety. Thus, on 17 December 1965 a letter to the editor of *The Commercial Appeal* (the Memphis newspaper) was reprinted under the headline "Marine in Vietnam Is Caustic". It was a letter from corporal Jimmie L. Stewart, a brother of William and Dezert Stewart, Mrs. Maurice Tritt and Mrs. Roland Cozart, all of Brownsville. At this relatively early stage in the war the letter's critical attitude vis-à-vis the anti-war demonstrations in the United States, shifting from a teach-in on the campus of the University of Michigan during the night of 24-25 March 1965 (Robert D. Schulzinger, *A Time for War: The United States and Vietnam, 1941-1975*, p.227) to the disorderly demonstrations involving radical pacifists in October 1965, (Schulzinger, p.234) was unprecedented:

> I am a Marine in Vietnam. I have heard about the people in the United States and all of the demonstrations they are putting on there. I think it one of the worst and most downright ridiculous things that I have ever heard in my life. We are over here giving our lives in a war and the people of the United States are saying and calling us women and children killers.

The tone of the letter is one of angered surprise. In corporal Stewart's view the world is turned upside down. He has found that his fellow-countrymen, instead of giving him and all American servicemen risking their lives for their country their wholehearted support, instead accuse the

American soldiers in Vietnam of despicable atrocities. This Marine, however, does not take this kind of what he believes to be senseless criticism lying down, which is why he decided to write the letter.

The letter also serves a didactic purpose. He tells his fellow-Americans what is really going on in Vietnam:

> I tell you, and I tell America, if they could, come here, join with us, and see for themselves what is taking place, they would change their minds. We here are fighting a war where everyone here is a suspected Vietcong. Where you never know when one is going to shoot you or say hello, where one is going to wave his hand to say hello or throw a grenade at you.

The Marine corporal turns the tables on the people who criticize soldiers in Vietnam, and participate in anti-war demonstrations. He argues that they are as bad as the Vietcong and are in fact the enemies of the American soldiers in Vietnam.

> I think that the people that start all of these demonstrations are not better than a Vietcong communist himself, and in my opinion, that is all he is.

Not content with just airing his grievances, corporal Stewart wants the anti-war demonstrators to be dealt with. "There should be something done about this." Interestingly, the Marine distinguishes between his native state of Tennessee and the rest of the United States, which is where the anti-war demonstrations take place. For that reason he can end his letter to the readers of the *Brownsville States-Graphic* with a sense of pride:

> Thank God that the people of Tennessee are a proud people and that they will stand behind the old boys that are in Vietnam fighting for our Tennessee and the United States. When I read . . . of the other states and what outlandish things they are doing, I am very proud of our old state, Tennessee. I am proud to fight for my people in my home state. I know if I give my life, that [it is] not given for a hopeless cause, because the people of Tennessee are behind all of the soldiers in Vietnam. I am proud to be from the Volunteer State.
> CPL. JIMMIE L. STEWART
> 3rd Bn. 12th Marines

Bty.G., 3rd Mar.Div. (Rein)
FMF
c/o FPO San Francisco
Calif. 96601

Marine corporal Stewart's letter suggested that the attitude in his native state of Tennessee was different from that found elsewhere in the United States.

Indeed, West Tennessee and the entire South have traditionally been more patriotic that the rest of the nation. The interviewees echoed the view expressed by corporal Stewart (Cf. chapter 3). In referring to Brownsville and Haywood County and its inhabitants, interviewees used the designation "the South", thus implicitly stating that for them West Tennessee was an integral part of the region. The view expressed by corporal Stewart therefore may be Southern rather than just typical of West Tennessee. The point is further illustrated by an interview with Ray Dixon of Brownsville, who responded to student protests against the War in Vietnam as follows:

> I think generally Southern people felt during those protests that those kids had no right to be there challenging the military in the first place. Most people in the South looked at the protests as strictly anti-American.

"The Story of the Viet Nam Widows" was published in the local newspaper on 14 January 1966. Jere Hooper, a native of Brownsville, had sent his local newspaper this story which had first been printed in the *Los Angeles Herald Examiner*. It was about the wives of men who had given their lives in Vietnam. One of the wives, living in Columbus, Georgia, home of the Army's Cavalry division, was Mrs. William A. Ferrell. (It is a conservative custom in the South to refer to a married woman by her husband's full name preceded by "Mrs."). She read in the newspaper of a fierce battle which her husband's outfit had been in. The next day a cab driver arrived near midnight with a telegram. "It was almost a relief to get it. It was like peace had settled. I could stop worrying. But it is hard to understand he is gone." Three weeks later the flag-draped casket of sergeant William A. Ferrell was carried from a hearse to a gravesite in Columbus. Mrs. Ferrell watched with dignity. "He wanted me to be a good soldier," she said. At the end of the burial ceremony she received the tightly folded stars and stripes that had covered the casket. She held it tightly and wept. "When the 1st Calvary shipped out in August [including sergeant Ferrell], 7,000 military families were left behind. About 3,000 decided to stay in Columbus. To help ease the burden, the non-military

families made the welfare of the soldiers' wives their project. And Columbus has made old-fashioned neighborliness the usual thing."

The women whose husbands were in Vietnam were so nervous that visitors were expected to telephone ahead, because they could not stand hearing the door bell. The explanation for this was that it was standard procedure for the Armed Services to send two officers to the house of the serviceman killed while serving his country.

In the last issue of the *Brownsville States-Graphic* of 1967, a letter to a young girl in Brownsville from her father (major Webb Banks) in Vietnam, was published as a letter to the editor. The letter provided the readers of the local paper with information about the distant country where local soldiers were fighting for their country. Of equal importance was the fact that the information came from someone they could identify with. The letter was also highly unusual in that the author's fascination with the beauty of the country, its culture, and its people, clearly transpired. The war and the stereotypical thinking in terms of friend and foe, good and evil, are absent. There is only the sheer wonder at the beauty found in Southeast Asia. The letter reads like a page from the diary of a traveller in an exotic country. The images of Vietnam evoked, and the language they are couched in turn the letter into a literary document. Yet it was written by a high-ranking American soldier in a war zone.

Major Banks' letter exuded the spirit of president Kennedy's Peace Corps. In 1961 this kind of writing could have won the hearts and minds of Vietnamese peasants threatened by communist insurgents. On 1 March 1961, in fact, a cable went out from the White House to the U.S. Embassy in Saigon that read like *The Ugly American*, the novel by William J. Lederer and Eugene Burdick (1958), referred to as "a strong warning in prose fiction of what American cultural innocence and ignorance would lead to in Southeast Asia" (Thomas Myers, "Art and Literature: American Cultural Images of the Vietnam War" in Stanley I. Kutler, ed., *Encyclopedia of the Vietnam War*, 1996). The novel was taken very seriously by some. In September 1959, for example, John F. Kennedy was one of four senators who handed to each and every member of the U.S. Senate copies of this novel. (Schulzinger, p.98). The senators did so because *The Ugly American* carried the message (intended to make an impact on foreign policy makers in Washington, D.C.) that American diplomats stationed in a Southeast Asian country with a strong resemblance to Vietnam had no understanding of the country or its people. In the cable referred to before, Americans in Vietnam were advised to emphasize contacts with peasants and study the work of general Lansdale in the Philippines (Richard Reeves, *President Kennedy: Profile of Power*, 1993, p.69). Lansdale had been in the Office of Strategic Services in World War II and later, in the Philippines had helped president Ramon Magsaysay suppress the Huk rebellion (George C. Herring, *America's Longest War: The United States and Vietnam, 1950-1975*, 1986, p.51). President Kennedy also issued an executive order

creating the Peace Corps (1 March 1961). Its objective was for young Americans to "fan out over the world to live in mud huts and shanties, doing good" (Reeves, p.69). They were to live at the same level as the citizens of the countries which they were sent to, doing the same work, eating the same food, speaking the same language.[125] President Kennedy's Peace Corps came in for high praise in the local newspaper in November 1962. Reports from a number of developing countries showed that the natives of these countries believed the Americans working there to be sincere and dedicated. Despite teething problems at the beginning the Peace Corps was expanded: ". . . more and more Americans are spreading out all over the world in an effort to help the peoples of the various countries of the world". The commercial advantage of the Peace Corps was in particular that the United States could cut down on the traditional foreign aid program.

Major Banks' letter read as follows:

Dear Tina,

You asked me to write you about Vietnam so that you could read it to your class. I hope I will be able to give you and your classmates an idea of what Vietnam is really like.

Vietnam is a beautiful and fascinating country in spite of the ravages of war. It has dense jungles, beautiful coastlines, waterways, and many rugged mountains. The peasant farmers can be seen everywhere tilling their rice paddies, plowing with water buffalo or laboring in the cane fields. These people have become so accustomed to war that they seldom look up at the jets overhead or toward the explosions of heavy shells a short distance away.

Along the waterways there are thousands of fishermen in their bamboo boats working their nets or fish traps.

In the hills and mountains the various tribal people in their scanty clothing can be seen going about their daily lives. They hunt game with crossbows and arrows. These people hunt tigers, elephants, and other jungle animals which are plentiful in the deep mountainous jungles.

In the cities and surrounding areas, things are somewhat modern. In this country there is so much contrast of the new and the old, of the beautiful and the unsightly that it will be a country I will never forget.

The Vietnamese language sounds funny to us. The meaning of words are different when the tones in which they are spoken are changed. As a result, there is a strange musical quality in the Vietnamese speech. Vietnamese can be written in either Chinese characters or the more popular national script, which is like we write. The Tribal people in the Highlands speak a variety of languages. Some of these Tribal languages can be written and some

cannot.

Vietnamese food consists of rice, shrimp, bean sprouts, shredded banana stalks, and a type of seaweed. Along the coast and in the Delta area, pineapples, watermelons, tangerines, oranges and bananas are available. The Vietnamese national dish is a fish sauce called "nuoc-mam". With the exception of rice no other food is more popular. This fish sauce is made by placing fish and salt in a vat with pressure applied to mash the liquid from the fish. Six pounds of fish will produce one pint of "nuoc-mam". This process is continued from four months to a year. When the bacterial fermentation has completed its action, the liquid is drained off, strained and placed in containers made of clay. I have never eaten any of this, but I sure have smelled it - and what a smell!!

The Vietnamese people are small and generally very nice. You must understand that there have been relatively few years that the Vietnamese have not been dominated by a foreign power. The people in the South want freedom and have asked the Americans to help them.

I hope this will give you a little understanding of the people of Vietnam.

Your Father,
Follin Banks

This letter from a soldier-father in war-torn Vietnam to his young daughter in Brownsville is unique for several reasons. Firstly, it is a sweet, beautiful letter from a father to his daughter; it is as if he is in the same room, quietly sharing his knowledge with her about a subject unfamiliar to her. It is hard to tell from the tone of the letter that ten thousand miles separate Follin Banks from his daughter Tina. Secondly, Banks' letter was written in response to his daughter's request to write her something about Vietnam. What strikes the reader in the American serviceman's letter to his child is that he discusses Vietnam favorably: "the Vietnamese people are small and generally nice". He gives a detailed description of the country's sheer beauty. In discussing its geography, he mentions mountains, rivers, jungles, and the seaboard. He mentions peasants and fishermen, and the exotic ways of the tribal people in the mountainous part of Vietnam. Major Banks gives a lucid description of the Vietnamese language, pointing out that Vietnamese can be written in either Chinese characters or the more popular national script, which is the way Americans write. He mentions the tropical fruit grown in the Mekong Delta in the South and claims that the favorite Vietnamese food is a fish sauce and proceeds to describe its preparation in great detail.

The attitude to Vietnam emanating from the letter is unusual; on the brink of 1968 American involvement in Vietnam was still increasing and

the horror of the war in terms of American soldiers killed and wounded was something that all Americans were aware of, which makes major Banks' letter all the more remarkable. His letter does not ignore the war, rather it is something mentioned in passing, as a fact of life for the Vietnamese. The letter does not mention his duties or experiences in Vietnam. The justification for the American presence in Vietnam as he sees it and passes on to his daughter is that the people in the South want freedom and have asked the Americans to help them.

Thirdly, the letter that major Banks sent to Tina served several purposes. Basically, it was, of course, a letter from a father to his daughter. The letter was also intended to be read to Tina's class in school. Indirectly, the audience in the school would be larger than Tina's class. A number of students were bound to discuss what they had heard in class at home or with other people in the community. Finally, the letter was printed in the *Brownsville States-Graphic*, which was read by many in the local community. The importance of the letter therefore exceeds the level of a father-daughter communication. In effect, the letter looked beyond the war and showed an interest from which military rhetoric is lacking.

The articles about local servicemen in the *Brownsville States-Graphic* during the years when they were involved in the Vietnam War, are a window on the war. The view they offer to the community is limited, which follows from the fact that a limited number of men served in the war. Despite this restriction, the view of the War in Vietnam offered in the local newspaper ranges from the picturesque and the sublime in the letter from major Banks to his daughter to the heart-rending uncertainty of the fate of soldiers in Vietnam or the survivors' exasperation with the military bureaucracy when it came to the awarding of the Purple Heart.

The death of Rick Johnston, a young soldier from Brownsville who went to Vietnam as a volunteer illustrates this final point. Rick Johnston's death has been painful for his family to the present day. His parents have been trying in vain to get a posthumous Purple Heart for their son for many years. The military authorities responsible have so far denied their request for the award on the basis that there were no witnesses to the helicopter crash and that it could therefore not be determined whether the death was an accident or not. In a written response the military authorities stated in 1996 that the request for closer investigation was one of approximately 10,000 suggesting that a definitive decision would not be made in the foreseeable future.

The Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) sent the following information on Specialist Johnston:

--- General / Personal ---
Last Name: JOHNSTON
First Name: RICHARD KEITH
Home of Record (official): BROWNSVILLE

State (official) : TN
Date of Birth: Friday, December 23, 1949
Sex: Male
Race: Caucasian
Marital Status: Single

--- Military ---
Branch: Army
Rank: SP4
Serial Number: 354404967
Component: Regular
Pay grade: E4
MOS (Military Occupational Specialty code): 67N2F

--- Action ---
Start of Tour: Wednesday, May 6, 1970
Date of Casualty: Monday, August 17, 1970
Age at time of loss: 20
Casualty type: (C1) Non-hostile, died of other causes
Reason: Air loss - Crashed on land (Crew member - Helicopter)
Country: South VietNam
Province: Binh Dinh
The Wall: Panel 08W - Row 118

On the basis of this information, Richard Johnston's death has been ruled as non-hostile. Army Regulation 600-8-22 Par 2-8a (5) states that the Purple Heart award can only be made as the direct result of an act of any hostile foreign force. The official reason for the crash is *air loss*. No explanation is given for this, however. The logical follow-up question would be, "Was the *air loss* the result of engine failure or hostile fire, or was there any other reason for the crash?" Helicopters do not just drop out of the sky. The official reason stated for the crash remains unsatisfactory.

The Vietnam veterans organization has indicated that the only thing the family can do if they disagree with the Army's decision not to award the Purple Heart, is to petition the Board for Correction of Army Records and ask that the records be corrected to show that Richard Johnston was awarded the Purple Heart. For almost thirty years the family has been trying in vain to get the posthumous Purple Heart, and all this time the pain has endured.

Susan K. Johnston Pettigrew, Richard Johnston's sister, in a letter to the author, said:

My older brother, Rick, was a helicopter gunner in 1970 when his

helicopter went down near the Cambodian border. According to the U.S. Army, all on board were killed. They said that the group was on some sort of early morning mission and they struck "something" in the fog, which caused the crash. He went to Vietnam of his own free will, after attending University of Tennessee at Martin for one year.

It has been twenty-five years since Rick was killed and besides the void in all of our lives because of his absence, the Army has yet to provide my parents with the Purple Heart. They say there is a backlog of about 10,000 requests and the last time I spoke with them they could not even find the paperwork regarding our request. I am working on other routes to get the Army to take some action on this. I would like my parents to have Rick's Purple Heart before they die.

A letter bringing the matter to the attention of vice-president Al Gore, was passed on to the Military Awards Branch of the Department of the Army, U.S. Total Army Personnel Command, Alexandria, Va., and yielded the following reply:

In order to qualify for an award of the PH, two requirements must be met. First, the individual must have been wounded or injured as the direct result of enemy action. Second, the wounds or injuries must have been serious enough to require medical treatment that was recorded in official Army records.

Based on these criteria, we are unable to confirm Specialist Johnston's entitlement to an award of the Purple Heart. The documentation required to support this request should be available in Specialist Johnston's Official Military Personnel File (OMPF), which is maintained at the U.S. Army Reserve Personnel Center (ARPERCEN), 9700 Page Boulevard, ATTN: ARPC-VSA-I, St. Louis, MO 63132-5000. Therefore, your correspondence has been forwarded to them so that a review of his OMPF can be conducted.

Additionally, we have asked ARPERCEN to review all Morning Reports and Hospital/Clinical records to help in determining if an award of the PH is authorized. If medical documentation can be located to substantiate an award of the PH, ARCERPEN will provide this office with the necessary information so that orders, citation, and medal set can be prepared and forwarded to his family.

I regret that my reply could not be more favorable. The fact that we cannot confirm Specialist Johnston's entitlement to an award of the PH in no way detracts from his meritorious service to our nation during a time of great need.

Sincerely,
John R. Osweiler
Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Army
Chief, Personnel Service
Support Division

The letter is a clear example of the beaurocratic way of dealing with what quite obviously remains a family tragedy; it lacks the kind of empathy the military invariably demonstrates in the days immediately following the death of a soldier killed in the line of duty, when a serviceman stays with the family until the day of the funeral.

*Editorials**

The editorial columns of Southern country newspapers reflected, and often gave direction to, the conservatism of their predominantly white audiences. But the region also produced a number of spirited editors who spoke out, often in strong terms, against the prevailing climate of opinion.[126] The history of Southern journalism contains stories of country editors who risked their lives by speaking out against racism. P.D. East, for example, founded the *Petal Paper* (1953) in Petal, Mississippi, "and made it into an institution of small-town racial liberalism" (Charles Reagan Wilson & William Ferris, *Encyclopedia of Southern Culture*, 1989, p.937). The *Brownsville States-Graphic*, however, showed itself to be a traditional, conservative white newspaper throughout the decade of the Vietnam War and the civil rights movement. For example, the editorial on 29 April 1960 focused on the aftermath of the civil rights bill; it emphasized that senator Harry F. Byrd of Virginia, one of the Southern Democrats who opposed the bill, said that, in the end, the result was a victory for the South, for most of the bill's objectionable provisions had been eliminated.[127] Senator Strom Thurmond phrased it even more strongly, saying that if it had not been for majority leader Lyndon Johnson, the South would have not been saved from a viciously punitive civil rights law.[128]

The conservatism of the local newspaper is born out by the editorial "Did The Red Star Shine?" Published on 10 February 1961, it focused on civil rights. Five young students from the University of Michigan appeared before General Sessions judge Lyle Reid on a minor traffic violation charge. Judge Reid dismissed charges with the admonition that they leave town immediately. The students were said to be members of a campus political organization known as The Voice. They stated that their business here was to deliver food and clothing to needy blacks of this county. The

* All references giving dates placed in brackets are to the *Brownsville States-Graphic*.

editorial doubted whether this was the sole purpose of their visit. "We . . . concur with the thinking of the local police, who arrested them, that the packages of food were just blinds to admit them to mingle with local Negroes and add fuel to the smoldering fire that, if fanned enough by outside agitation, will burst into a flame that will consume white and black alike." The editor added suspiciously that the FBI should investigate The Voice, because it was feared that it might be a communist organization.

Concern about race relations transpired from the editorial headlined "Let Us Not Be Consumed". Throughout the United States race relations were strained and the media reported trouble spots on an almost daily basis (28 June 1963). Serious trouble in Haywood County had so far been avoided due to level-headed black leaders of the community, who had successfully influenced the more impatient members of their community. Quoting the Supreme Court, which had said that "in our democracy change must come in an orderly manner", the editorial again focused on race relations on 6 September 1963. It expressed the view that "the danger in official support for illegal mass demonstrations is just now beginning to be appreciated outside the South," and that racial groups and in fact any other group could cause chaos and trouble, because they were convinced that neither the federal government nor the federal courts would convict them for violating local laws.

Set against this suspicion of federal power, the editorial in the local newspaper on 4 October 1963 condemned a serious incident in Birmingham, Alabama (on 15 September 1963 a bomb killed four young girls at Sunday school in the 16th Street Baptist Church) in the strongest possible terms:

> On Killing Children
>
> One can think of nothing more barbaric, and nothing designed to do more harm to the United States, and the South, than the bombing of a church and the killing of four negro children - an event which recently occurred in Alabama.
>
> It is difficult to conceive of a mentality that would have planned such an attack. . .
>
> One of the great traditions and heritages in the United States is the freedom of speech and the freedom to exercise the religion of one's choice. When an attack on a church is committed, ostensibly because of the expressions of leaders of members of that church, it is a threat to every American citizen, for it is an attack on democracy itself and on the freedom of the individual.
>
> Acts such as the murder of innocent children in Birmingham are so repulsive, however, and so inexcusable and damning, that if they are repeated or continue, the result can only be fatal to the cause of the white majority in the South. If there is one thing the nation will

> not stand for, and should not, it is the murder of innocent children, and innocent people, by those who would substitute terror and passion for intelligent, lawful efforts to win the desired goal.

The editorial of 13 March 1964 took a dim view ("Our Nation Is in Distress") of the civil rights bill, which had passed in the House of Representatives, but not yet in the Senate. It would constitute the greatest grasp for executive power conceived in this century. It was feared that the bill could well wreck the nation. The editorial ended almost in despair. "Since 1776 we have been a nation of the people and by the people. If this dastardly bill is passed, we will become a nation of the few by the few. Only the people of our nation can save us by urging their senators to fight this bill. Act now or we're doomed."

Set against this is a conciliatory editorial which is one of the most remarkable to appear during the years of the Vietnam War, published in the *Brownsville States-Graphic* of 10 July 1964.[129] Headlined "Our Negroes Are Good Citizens," it commented that the blacks of Brownsville and Haywood County had shown on several occasions that they were first-class citizens. As an example the almost negligible reaction by the colored citizens of the community to the recent national passage of the civil rights bill was mentioned. The relative lack of response was explained in the editorial as follows:

> They apparently realize that the answer to the negro's problem is education and not the disgraceful demonstrations that are evident in other sections of the nation.
>
> Actually if the truth were known, the majority of negroes in Haywood County have too much dignity to partake in such activities.
>
> The present construction of a multi-classroom school, complete with athletic facilities, will do much to improve the status quo of our negro friends and it is indeed with great pleasure that we commend our colored friends of the county for their excellent judgment and examples of good citizenship which they are demonstrating.

The opinion expressed here in a slightly condescending, if not, as may be felt by some, downright patronizing tone, may be said to be the current view of the white members of the community in the light of what was happening elsewhere in the United States. What transpires is a desire on the part of the white population to keep blacks in their designated place, i.e. segregated and subservient. The editorial, in fact, is calling for an eternal status quo.

The Nashville Banner editorial of Tuesday, 17 August 1965, which was written following two demonstrations in Brownsville, was reprinted in the editorial column of the *Brownsville States-Graphic* of August 20. Around noon, on Saturday, August 14, a civil rights group demonstrated. Rev. James Edward Smith, a field secretary with the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) led approximately two hundred followers around the county courthouse. Addressing the crowd, he said that history had been made when some fifteen blacks entered the courthouse and visited the facilities inside. Later in the afternoon the Ku Klux Klan made a public appearance. About thirty silent Klan members marched around the courthouse. At 7:30 that evening Imperial Wizard Robert Shelton addressed a crowd of 1500. The editorial ran: "Well Done, Haywood County: A Crisis Resolved With Good Sense, Good Will":

> IN THE AREA of human relations, nothing outranks good sense and good will - in conscience employed - as the twin arbiters of any boiling dispute that can arise: the vital ingredients to hold a community together when circumstances of storm beset it from within or without. And for that pattern of responsible conduct, a salute is in order to the good citizens of Haywood County, white and negro alike.

The newspaper accused out-of-state extremists on both sides of trying to upset the delicate balance between the races locally. The editorial proceeded to praise all those involved in avoiding disaster:

> Standing on the sidelines, just in case, were two able representatives of state authority, Safety Commissioner Greg O'Rear and Elmer Craig, chief of the Tennessee Highway Patrol.
> With individual and community pride, accepting the responsibility in both particulars, Haywood Countians worked together to spare Brownsville and environs the disgrace of riot and hoodlum violence.
> What could have become, in miniature, another Los Angeles explosion, was averted, because a law abiding constituency made its weight felt in the scales of public decision. As parties equally to the courage, the judgment and mutual good will it took, white and negro citizens together turned thumbs down on disorder, and stood as one on the side of the law.

The editor offered Brownsville as an example for the nation:

> Individual and community self-respect are primary assets strengthening the moral fiber. Respectful of authority and self-discipline, they are essential to social order and civilization itself. Never more in need of an example for defusing an emotional time bomb, and by intelligent community action removing it, the nation can find it in Haywood County, Tennessee.

The decision to print the editorial of the Nashville newspaper verbatim in the pages of the *Brownsville States-Graphic* was significant. An editorial written for a Nashville newspaper automatically carried more weight than an editorial written by the local editor for the local newspaper. The effect locally was that of an authoritative, white, voice at a remove, behind which the local newspaper and its editor could hide. The riots in Los Angeles were seized upon as an opportunity to look down at the rest of America to the benefit of one's own state and county.

In its own editorial the *Brownsville States-Graphic* felt gratified by the compliments received from the metropolitan newspaper. It was felt to be a shot in the arm, which would give the community the strength to stand fast and not let agitators upset its long-cherished reputation for cultured, law abiding, hospitable citizenry. The newspaper praised the State Highway Patrol for saving the community the embarrassment of losing face during a critical situation.

"May It Never Happen Again," ran the headline of the editorial on 20 May 1966 in which two bombings were commented on. The attacks had been aimed at a black residence and on the soon-to-be-opened business firm of a white man. The first explosion damaged the west side of the home of Odell Sanders and family, located on the northwest corner of Margin and Russell streets (Cf. pp.70, 71, 73); the second blast, which occurred some eleven minutes later, practically ruined a new, concrete, block building, which was soon to be the location of Bill Harmon's Repair Shop, located on the Alamo Road (Cf. p.71). The explosions had taken place at night and, the paper argued, possibly shattered the hopes, dreams and efforts of local city planners for the prosperous and harmonious future of Brownsville for years to come. The newspaper expressed the view that it looked as if the purpose of the action was to create disorder in the community, since the targets had been selected diversely.

The paper maintained its patronizing attitude to blacks. On 12 August 1966, for example, in an editorial ironically headlined "Civil Wrong" - implying that something was not right about civil rights - it was stated that the heavy black population of the Ninth District elected two black candidates to serve on the local county governing body, the Haywood County Quarterly Court. The newspaper doubted whether the newly elected candidates possessed the education required to perform the duties of the court, because "we are not too well acquainted with our new magistrates". It was felt that as the men were not qualified to serve, they

would be an embarrassment to all the blacks of the county.

The editorial of 12 April 1968 stated that for several years Brownsville and Haywood County had been known as a civil rights hotbed. Many visitors from the North on civil rights missions stayed in Haywood County for many months and there had been several federal civil rights cases, but for several weeks all had been quiet, in contrast to other parts of the United States. "We possibly have several reasons for our present tranquility, the main one being, as we see it, the fine character of the negro people of our community. We believe that it is the fine, decent leadership among the people here, who have made an effort in rearing their children properly that has curtailed riot activity on the local scene."

A step forward on the road towards integration was that for the first time in its history the city of Brownsville hired two black police officers. On 12 July 1963, the appointment of two black policemen to the local force was called sensational news. The two new officers, Robert Wiley and George Delks, were assigned to the black business district of the city, but after completion of a police training course, they would probably be responsible for the black residential areas as well. Although, from a historical perspective, the appoint of the two black police officers was a step forward, it was only a modest step, for the structure of the community, the divide between whites and blacks, remained intact.

In August 1963 when civil rights issues were gaining momentum, the local newspaper urged people of both races to think carefully before resorting to action which would be regretted later. "We refer to the organizing and functioning of the bi-racial groups, which from all indications, are having trouble in more ways than one." Representatives of both races were urged to make "every effort" to get along with everybody, including members of the opposite race, as well as members of their own race. "We beseech all of you to set aside petty jealousies and egos, and use calm, level-headed judgment in helping unite to solve our problems. By doing so we can continue to make our community and city a good place to live."[130] In the editorial of 9 August 1963 blacks received "praise". An unspecified race relations incident had taken place in the heart of the business district on Saturday, August 3. The newspaper commented: "We were pleased to note, however, that only a handful of negroes followed the bearded, white leader, who has a record of creating disorder." As said before, the attitude taken in the editorials towards the blacks was often condescending. The paper brought in Robert E. Lee as a figure of reconciliation between North and South. The editorial of 29 January 1960 stated that it was a tribute to the famous Virginian that his memory brought forth no enmity in any section of the country. The newspaper contained a brief biographical sketch and commented, "The record of his military achievements in that war is not needed here. His abilities were recognized on both sides long before the end, when Lee surrendered to general Grant at Appomattox courthouse, on April 9th,

1865."

Early signs of the civil rights issue that was to affect Brownsville and Haywood County and indeed the entire South, could be detected in the editorial on the platforms adopted by the major party conventions (9 September 1960). "What can be said positively at the moment is that some of the plans adopted by both major parties are highly dangerous. The Democrats . . . have set a target date of three years for forceful integration in the schools, etc." The Republicans adopted a platform which was "almost as bad", leading to the inevitable question, "So what are sincere conservatives to do?"

During the years of the Vietnam War the *States-Graphic* manifested itself to be a patriotic, anti-communist newspaper. On 24 February 1961, for instance, it published an editorial on patriotism.

> A number of editors, statesmen and military leaders are joining in an effort to restore patriotism to its proper place in the American way of life. This newspaper is more than willing to lend a hand in the campaign. The greatest single piece of evidence showing what has happened in this country - what has happened to the burning patriotism and dedication to the American way of life - came during the Korean Conflict. In that war many U.S. soldiers . . . obviously lacked an enthusiasm and an understanding of the government and the country.
>
> Some fell prey to communist propaganda because they did not know enough about the United States and its history and government to refute clever communist arguments. Others simply lacked patriotism and conviction when it came to the United States and the democratic system it represents.
>
> This . . . is the result of a period of deterioration in the homes, schools, movies, television, etc., which began in the 1930s, when it became popular to be cynical and to criticize the American system.

The editorial exuded a fairly typical cold war atmosphere, in which the lurking danger of communism was always evident or just below the surface. It also implied that only those lacking proper knowledge of the American democratic system could fall prey to communism.

The sense of history that Southerners have, in my view, figured prominently in "Lest We Forget" (17 March 1961), an editorial that marked the 100th anniversary of the Civil War. It expressed the pride that the local community felt in its heritage. Tennessee was the last of the states to secede from the Union. Notwithstanding this fact more battles were fought on Tennessee soil than in any other state, with the exception of Virginia. Haywood County was proud of its contribution to the Armies of Tennessee, who fought at almost every cross roads from its smoke

capped mountains to the muddy Mississippi.

The answer to the question why the Centennial should be celebrated, was, " . . . to point out the sturdy stock from which we came and the patriotism that still exists in the hearts of the greatest nation in the world today standing united under 'Old Glory' . . . ." Looking back to the time immediately following the surrender of the Southern forces by general Robert E. Lee, the newspaper pointed out that there was another kind of courage, quite distinct from the kind of courage displayed on the battlefield. This was the courage of a group of men, battleworn and hungry, with battered shoes and wornout uniforms, who turned their faces again toward their neglected homes and run-down farms determined to rebuild on the ashes of defeat this "beautiful Southland so dear to our hearts today".

The concluding paragraph of the editorial on the Centennial of the Civil War was in keeping with the importance attached to history in the South.[131] "May I suggest," wrote Paul Sims, "that whenever possible everyone both old and young read the exploits of the Armies of Tennessee, written by Stanley Horn, one of the state's best historians on this subject." "That Memorial Day at Shiloh" (7 April 1961) described in great detail one of the most important days of the Civil War, and delighted in the interest young boyscouts showed. The article is an attempt to remind the whites of their glorious history. It also tells them to be loyal to that past.

> It was on April 6, 1862, on Tennessee soil, that the only general in the history of our country was killed in battle. The man was general Albert Sidney Johnson and the place was on Shiloh battle ground.
>
> On April 6 and 7, 1862, at Pittsburg Landing, on the Tennessee river over 110,000 young Americans, representing 19 different states, were engaged in bloody battle near Shiloh Church.
>
> It was about 4 o'clock in the afternoon of April 6, that general Johnson, commanding the Southern Army, ordered his reserves to go into action. Fierce fighting raged in the nearby peach orchard. While personally directing his reserves, he was struck in the right leg by a mini ball which cut the large artery. At the time the general was struck he was sitting on his horse, "Fire Eater," underneath a large oak tree. He was alone at the time, having sent his personal physician to care for the wounded on the field. His volunteer aid, Isham G. Harris, Confederate governor of Tennessee had been sent by general Johnson to certain units with orders to charge. When governor Harris returned he found general Johnson reeling in the saddle. He was led to a shady spot in a nearby ravine and died a few minutes later from loss of blood . . . .
>
> Yesterday members of Boy Scout Troup 35 of Austin, placed a floral wreath on the tomb of the only general to die in action in this

United States of ours. The wreath was placed there at the request of Scout Troop 343, of Memphis, who supplied it.

In connection with the Civil War Centennial and the Confederate past, many articles appeared in the local paper on the war and regional history. As a related subject, the changing political scene received much attention. The editorial "Is the South Still Solid?" will serve as an example. It argued that, since its formation, the Democratic party had reigned supreme in the South. Early signs of the shifting scene became evident when president Eisenhower was a Republican candidate and managed to muscle in on the Solid South. It meant that several states, in the words of the editor, "betrayed the Democrats". President Kennedy, noticing the political changes in the South, with assistance from the Justice Department, acquired many new, i.e. black, voters who would mark their X beside the Democratic candidates. Many white voters were reluctant to vote Democrat when new black voters, who had been registered to vote since the previous election, voted for the Democratic candidate. "We could be wrong, but it looks as though the Solid South is gone forever," the editorial concluded. C. Thomas Hooper, in an interview with the author, looking at 1960s politics in retrospect, confirmed that many Southerners left the Democratic Party during president Johnson's term in office.

The Voting Rights Bills introduced by president Kennedy, designed to protect the right of every qualified citizen to vote, were discussed in an editorial on 22 March 1963: "It should be remembered that the right to vote is what this country is all about. We did not think taxation without representation was fair, and we were right, and we revolted against the British." The problems of the 1960s were felt to be different, however, according to the local editor, who argued that communities were "facing the problem in some sections of the South where illiterate residents outnumber the educated and qualified voters and naturally the qualified voters fear government will not be efficient or honest if the majority should take over. For this reason we have voter qualification laws." President Kennedy's bills, intended to protect the rights of all voters, would assume a man qualified to vote if he finished the sixth grade in school. The paper opposed this. Its opposition to imminent changes in the social fabric of the South was further evidence of the prevailing Conservative white view, which resisted change. It also explains why many Southerners today dislike president Kennedy and have no love for or even hate president Johnson.

On 3 May 1963, the paper foresaw that the Republican party would make further inroads into the Democratic South in the following year. The trend away from the one-party system in the South would continue.

"The South Loses," announced the headline on 31 March 1963, in a comment on the riots in Alabama, which were basically seen as

communist-inspired. In the summer of 1964, just before the convention of the Democratic Party in Atlantic City, Brownsville and Haywood County still identified with that party, although some doubt was creeping in: " . . . our (?) Democratic Party will convene". The editorial of 7 August 1964 briefly summarized the problems that the Democrats needed to solve before the presidential elections. A first problem was the choice of a running mate for president Johnson: should he be, in the words of the editorial, "be an individual of the Catholic faith" or just a member of the Kennedy family? Secondly, the Democrats would have approximately ten or twelve weeks to patch civil rights fences in the South. Mentioning Vietnam for the first time in its editorial columns, the paper expressed the belief that more would be heard about Vietnam from the Republicans. On an earlier occasion the paper had professed its sympathy for the Republican candidate Barry Goldwater, which pointed to a changing political landscape in the South (31 July 1964). In the editorial published in the *Brownsville States-Graphic* on 25 September 1964, "Has the Party Left the South or Has the South Left the Party?", it was suggested that the Democratic party had changed, not the South:

> With the decline of the Jeffersonian Democracy in America, many of the staunch members of the Democratic Party have turned their hopeful eyes to Barry Goldwater, the Republican candidate for president.
>
> Whether Mr. Goldwater will get an opportunity to emulate Moses and lead his people to the promised land, or whether he will if he becomes president, remains to be seen.
>
> One thing the Arizonian has accomplished is the surge of life in the two-party system in the South. Should no other good arise from his present campaign for the highest office in the land, it will at least show that Southerners will rise up in protest when their toes are trampled.

The changing political scene in the South was duly reflected in the pages of the local newspaper. It was spelled out, first, by the pro-Republican editorial mentioned above and again by an attack in the same paper, not six months later, on the - Democrat - president of the United States. A later editorial implied further criticism of president Johnson. Commenting on the introduction of the food stamp program (8 January 1965), it argued that both "the indigent" and the retail grocers would benefit. The program enabled many people to learn vocations and to upgrade their standard of living. However, the editorial ended on a sarcastic note, as follows, "Possibly the biggest benefit to president Johnson will be the countless millions of votes that he can expect as long as he runs for office, whether it is president or king of the U.S.A." The

lack of love in the South for president Johnson was also made clear in an editorial on 26 March 1965:

> Our president, Lyndon B. Johnson had an occasion within the past few days, to make a speech to the millions of people of these United States. In this speech there was one phrase that has caused us quite a bit of concern. This phrase was, "We Shall Overcome." According to Webster's dictionary, "overcome" means "get the better of, conquer, win a victory over, defeat, to make weak or helpless", and other similar definitions. Just what do you suppose our president meant by this phrase?
>
> As president of the 50 states in our nation, does he mean to overcome the people of these states, or part of these states? Is he president of all the people in the states, or just a few of the states? Just what are his plans. We wonder if he knows. One thing is sure, there are a great many people who want to be assured that the president of the United States is devoting his time to their interest, and not monkeying around with this Overcoming jazz.

The sarcastic suggestion that president Johnson bought the Southern black vote with the introduction of the food stamp program was undeserved. Although there is no denying that one of its effects would be that many blacks would cast their votes for the president, the food stamp program ought to be seen as part of the president's plan, frustrated by the War in Vietnam, for a Great Society. In Brownsville and Haywood County, as evidenced by the vehement tone and choice of words of the editorial, it was viewed as a battle in the on-going fight for civil rights.

When the *Brownsville States-Graphic* some weeks later shifted its attention to the two local school systems, it was actually focusing on the continuing civil rights struggle locally. The problems regarding the integration of the schools in Brownsville and Haywood County were reported in detail on the front page, but there was no editorial comment. The editorial of 28 May 1965 explained why it declined to comment: "Thousands of paragraphs have already been published regarding the situation that is confronting our city and county school system at present. Our few comments would in no way help or hinder the situation, so we can only say 'no comment.'" However that may be, it is significant that the local editor declined to comment. His "silence" here is part of a careful policy of maintaining harmony in race relations on a local level.

On 11 March 1966 the editorial focused on the difficulties facing the two School Boards, who, with the new civil rights desegregation plan, were widely criticized, perhaps unjustly so. According to the local newspaper the Board members did their best for all concerned, but their job was becoming "increasingly more difficult", now that [out-of-state]

civil rights activists, who were unacquainted with local problems (one Board for county schools and one for city schools), attempted to intervene. The editorial ended by urging white and colored citizens "to bear with these school officials", hoping that eventually a better system of education would evolve for all children. Again the role the local newspaper and its editor played in attempting to tone down the emotions involved in civil rights issues is obvious.

In the wake of the Civil Rights Act the move towards integration in the school systems of city and county was slow and painful (Cf. pp.45, 65, 68-70, 72-76, 111, 115, 117-121, 131). "Freedom of Choice vs Community Hostility," the headline of the editorial on 2 June 1967 announced (Cf. pp.68-70, 72, 117, 119, 131). It focused on the forthcoming appearance in federal court, in Memphis, of the members of the Haywood County School Board (Cf. pp.68, 69, 74). The Justice Department charged that the freedom of choice system of school integration in Brownsville and Haywood County was unsatisfactory due to certain existing conditions. According to the Justice Department the dual (county-city) system was an impediment to the freedom of choice plan, and the hostility of the community influenced people in their choice of school.

The editorial used historical and financial arguments to account for the existing dual system: The school systems were set up before the days of modern transportation. "City tax payers support one system and city and county tax payers support the other." The charge of "community hostility" was dealt with as follows. First of all, it was admitted that "certain events" had transpired of which "we, and the majority of our citizens" were ashamed. What exactly the "certain events" referred to was not made clear, although, of course, the readers of the local newspaper at the time understood perfectly.

The existence of actual "community hostility" was denied.

> For instance, we can recall no evidence of hostility when masses of negroes registered to vote. No one made derogatory remarks when negroes started making free use of the public library. There were no incidents when restaurants and schools were patronized by negroes. Even a so-called freedom march, led down a main street by an individual using the most profane of language, failed to arouse one blow in protest.

The editorial also stated that two black elected officials had encountered no hostility when they attended the meetings of the Haywood County Quarterly Court. The article concluded by stating that all Haywood Countians had lived together for many years, and that the races were aware of each other's shortcomings. "We have much in common. Our ties are closely knit."

On 16 June 1967 the editor of the local newspaper again dwelt on the lawsuit in federal court involving the local School Boards. Apparently, the Justice Department had many witnesses who had stated that the charges were accurate and that black parents were afraid to send their children to the predominantly white schools due to the various cross burnings. Beyond these intimidating scenes, there is no evidence of rioting or any use of violence. It was admitted, though, that certain acts had been committed against blacks, but the editorial suggested that the harassment had been directed at out of community persons, who visited the area on self-styled civil rights missions. Everybody in the community was urged to accept the verdict of the court and to remain calm.

The paper kept its calm after the verdict. On 23 June 1967 the week-long trial in federal court in Memphis came to an end. Judge Bailey Brown ordered both sides to submit a summary stating what concessions and/or adjustments each would make to aid him in his decision. It was expected that the county and city school systems would be consolidated. When the long-awaited decision came in August 1967, the editorial comment was, "The Die Is Cast."(13 August 1967)

Increased integration of the area schools, pupils and faculty made for a different school year (30 August 1968). The schools in Haywood County from this moment on were operated under the provisions of a federal court order. Any individuals or groups interfering with this system of operation could well be held in contempt of court. The only way open to those who did not like the changes and were self-sufficient enough financially, was to provide private education for their children. It was obvious that the newspaper did not like the present situation, which had been forced on the community by the federal court. "As the situation stands, it behooves us all to keep our noses clean, and avoid any federal slaps on the wrist, whether we like it or not. Who knows, there might come a day when judges handle only the fate of criminals and civil disputes. . ." On 11 April 1969, the editorial criticized the interference of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare in the integration plans of the local School Board. "As we see it, the freedom of choice plan, although not suiting everyone, was the fairest method of school integration devised. Quite a number of negro parents and/or their children indicated their choice to attend previously all-white schools and as far as we know, were quite satisfied with the schools, their classmates and teachers. Now HEW (the Dept. of Health, Education and Welfare) has decided that the negroes must have someone make a choice of schools for their children and thus, the cause of the Justice department objections." The editorial pointed out that HEW through its actions was violating the civil rights of both whites and blacks in the community.

The battle for school integration on the terms of the local School Board was hardening by spring 1969. The local newspaper printed an editorial that placed the integration of local schools in the wider perspective of the region's past, going back all the way to the Civil War

and the period of Reconstruction following it. The problems facing the community in 1969 were considered to be as serious as in the Reconstruction days. At the same time the local newspaper accepted its responsibility and played a unifying role in an attempt to defuse the situation. It did so by describing the past history of the county as well as by urging the readers not to condemn the School Board members or to malign the public school system.

The editorial placed the skirmishes surrounding the integration of the local schools within the larger context of Southern history:

> Just about a century ago, when this newspaper first came into being, our section of the country was engaged in what was then known as the Reconstruction. This Reconstruction period lasted several years following the great War Between the States. Our county had sons engaged in combat on both warring sides and considerable feeling existed between the two factions on their return home. In addition to this, the president's Emancipation Proclamation created many additional citizens, who had no previous training or education for earning a livelihood. On top of this, our county had soldiers and Federal officials on hand to supervise the activities of the community. As impossible as the situation seemed then, our community overcame the obstacles that seemed unsurmountable.
>
> Today, we have a similar situation or so some people think. It is to them that we wish to point out the problems with which our forefathers had to contend. They accomplished a remarkable job. We can certainly do as much or better. We certainly would not be presumptuous enough to stipulate the means by which our children should be educated, but we do urge parents to familiarize themselves with the situation that actually exists. First, our likes and dislikes have no bearing on the matter of school integration. Unfortunately, we live in a geographical area where the adoption and/or enforcement of school laws creates more displeasure and concern. Second, we have such laws only because they were passed by our elected legislators and were made because the majority of the people in the United States desire the laws. We urge you, therefore, not to be swayed into condemnation of our School Board members or maligning of the public school system as a result of rumors which always seem to abound when any change is imminent. The School Board's job is to educate the children of our county, black and white, providing an education comparable to that of other public school systems.
>
> Parents who are of financial means can very well take their text on the merits or demerits of our public school system, as they can afford private instruction for their children, should they desire it. It is our duty to see that this Board has the proper support in discharging their duties because a community without a public

school system is dead.

We, here in Haywood, do not plan to die, not just yet.

To an outsider the period of Reconstruction and the integration of schools may appear to be quite disparate subjects. In the South, however, this is different. I have printed the full text of the editorial for the insight it provides in the culture of the Southern region. In what way is the South different, then? As pointed out before, many Southerners show a keen sense of history, and the editor of the *Brownsville States-Graphic* is no exception. The Reconstruction period clearly was a difficult time for white Southerners. They had just lost the Civil War, which, for the region as a whole, apart from wounded pride, meant the permanent loss of a way of life. On a personal level Southerners, almost without exception, lost relatives, friends, and property. In addition, Union soldiers were stationed in the area and blacks held important positions in the courthouse and elsewhere. What these historical facts show is that Southerners learned to live with defeat. History also shows that whites and blacks learned to live together in changed circumstances. The problems connected with the struggle surrounding civil rights in the 1960s, of which the integration of black and white schools was a major aspect in Brownsville and Haywood County, echoed the hard times of the period of Reconstruction. The advice which the editor of the local newspaper has for his readers is that school integration may be difficult, but that the local community can draw strength from the past.

The initial rejection of the School Board plans for a new high school by the Haywood County court prompted an editorial plea for unity ("These are troubled times and the need for unity and consideration of each other is very great.") in the community on 30 May 1969. The editorial explained that the court's rejection of the plans was inspired by their desire to save taxpayers money. The court re-convened the following evening and voted unanimously to construct a new, central high school.

At the end of the summer of 1969, at the start of another school year (5 September 1969) the editorial series, which it had developed into, on school integration, was continued. The factual situation was that there would be total integration in all elementary schools, with the two high schools operating on a freedom of choice plan for another year. The editorial blamed the federal court for the existing situation, which caused the parents of both white and black children much concern. It was reported that many parents had already made arrangements to enroll their children in other schools, which had little or no integration. Other parents intended to keep their children at home. At the end of the first week of school, the editorial in the local newspaper was simply headed, "Integrated Schools." The change had caused much confusion, partly as a result of the transportation problem and enlargement projects in certain schools, which were still incomplete when the schools opened after the

summer. Also, "quite a few instances of racial imbalance had occurred in some class rooms". As foreseen "many parents have seen fit to place their children in other schools and some are not sending their children to school anywhere." The newspaper urged parents to be patient and to try to cooperate.

Still on the subject of schools, the editorial of 12 February 1971 dealt with the incidents that had occurred between supporters of the new Tennessee Academy, and those who were doing the best they could to develop the finest public school system possible for Haywood County. The editor of the local paper believed that the incidents were not conducive to promoting harmonious relations among the population. The newspaper said that it was imperative that this petty misunderstanding ceased at once, before it was blown out of proportion.

It is remarkable that as late as the summer of 1966, the War in Vietnam was not mentioned by its full name in the local paper, though in an editorial written for the July 4 celebrations, 1966, the Vietnam War was referred to. "We are presently involved in a war. A war in a distant land. A war being fought to protect a similar occurrence on our own soil." Protests against the war were said to be coming from a small minority and the local newspaper expressed the view that America was fighting to protect its freedom and liberties. On the eve of Veterans' Day the editorial expressed the view that America was betraying the soldiers in Vietnam who were fighting for their country - "Are We Breaking Faith?" - , because on the home front there were riots, demonstrations, and draft card burnings on an almost daily basis.

The editorials published in the *Brownsville States-Graphic* during the years of the Vietnam War (1960-1973) were concerned with the subjects that mattered to the community, ranging from the purely local, so-called blue laws to the concerns that city and county shared with all the other Southern communities and were, in fact, characteristic of the region. These were patriotism, the passionate interest in history, and the continued fascination with the Civil War, and civil rights.[132] The civil rights struggle that actually shook the country as a whole as much as the Vietnam War, caused much mortification on a local level. The subsequent integration of the two local school systems consumed as much editorial space as it did front page articles. A point worth noting is that the Vietnam War, which on a national level was discussed and commented on in and by the media on a daily basis, was virtually absent in the editorials of the local newspaper. Perhaps this was not surprising, for most members of the community watched television and read a regional or national newspaper and did not really require the local paper to add its voice to this orchestra. From various reports, Selective Service news, as well as cartoons published in the *Brownsville States-Graphic* over the years of the war, it was obvious that the newspaper reflected the conservative attitude of the white community, which meant, as far as the Vietnam War was concerned, that this community supported the war effort and had no

sympathy for draft dodgers. The conservatism of this community also showed in the genuine dislike of president Johnson and the civil rights bill. Yet, although the majority of whites strongly objected to full integration of the city and county schools, it was finally accepted, when all means to appeal the decision had been rejected in federal court.

The *Brownsville States-Graphic* during the years of the War in Vietnam showed itself a typical post-World War II, Southern country newspaper. It reflected a close intimacy with its readers and identified strongly with the region's culture, and functioned as the local community's bulletin board. Its style was informal. The atmosphere, of the editorials in particular, sometimes was conciliatory, sometimes it was patronizing to blacks. The newspaper sometimes pointed at outsiders and/or communists as evil influences. The paper saw its own role, in the final instance, as crucial, and it insisted on being morally correct, as opposed to politically correct.

During the Vietnam War era, then, the local newspaper was a white man's newspaper, reflecting an attitude that defended the status quo. It was in tune with the white man's interests, which meant that it disliked and resisted any change that might upset the racial balance in the community. Basically, Brownsville and Haywood County exemplified an insular mindset, originating, perhaps, in the area's agricultural pursuits and the inhabitants' attachment to the land. The *Brownsville States-Graphic*, as a local bulletin board, did not carry in-depth articles on the major issues that moved the entire nation. However, on the occasions when out-of-state activists arrived to help the local black population in the matter of civil rights, the paper reported the facts and reflected on them in its editorial comments, invariably looking at such problems as a matter of law and order. Such a point of view precluded examing or reflecting on the civil rights issue in its own right and, consequently, the newspaper failed to show evidence of empathy with the fate of the blacks in the community.

3. *BROWNSVILLE, HAYWOOD COUNTY, TENNESSEE, AND THE YEARS OF THE VIETNAM WAR*

Towards an Oral History

In the course of a year, starting in August 1995 and ending in another August, in 1996, I taped an extensive series of interviews with people from all walks of life, from both the black and the white communities in Brownsville and Haywood County, Tennessee.[133] My primary object was to enquire into the nature of the legacy of the Vietnam War in this Southern community in rural West Tennessee. In my discussion of the interviewees I have distinguished between the civilians and the Vietnam veterans. The reason for the distinction I have made is that while it is true that all interviewees can be identified with the Southern community of Brownsville and Haywood County, it is also true that only a limited number of them was sent to Vietnam; the others, constituting the majority of the people I interviewed, were in America for the duration of the Vietnam era.

To what extent was the perception of the Vietnam War, in the case of those who were in Vietnam, colored by their experiences? Similarly, how did those who were in the United States during the Vietnam era perceive the war? Were there any further distinctions within the two groups referred to above? For example, as regards the civilians, were there any noticeable differences between those who were emotionally involved because their sons, husbands, grandsons, cousins or nephews, or friends, were in Vietnam and those for whom Vietnam was a distant war? Correspondingly, focusing on the Vietnam veterans, were their perceptions of the war in any way colored by rank, or anything else, such as the fact whether they were drafted into the service or whether they volunteered?

I also wanted to establish the Southernness of all interviewees and therefore asked the black and white members of this West Tennessee community to share with me, if they could, their thoughts and feelings about the South, the Civil War, civil rights and race relations. Discussing the Vietnam War in the South has a special significance, for while it is true that the Vietnam War has had a lasting impact on the United States as a whole, its legacy in the South is different. The rest of America may have felt that it was the first war that was lost, but the South had experienced military defeat a hundred years before the other American regions became acquainted with it. An important question therefore is, to what extent was the perspective of the Vietnam War of each interviewee colored by the legacy of the Civil War, or, as some of them put it, the War Between the States?

The people I interviewed received no advance briefing other than a

short announcement of the subject over the telephone by either one of my contacts in Brownsville or myself. On more than one occasion I had a chance meeting with individuals, in the library, in the street, or in a convenience store, and was able to interview people on the spur of the moment. The interviews were recorded on tape. All interviewees received a transcript and were given an opportunity to make known to me their objections, if any, to my using their texts or certain parts of the texts. One interviewee asked me to disregard part of the interview. There were others for whom the actual remembering was emotional and painful, which was why they asked me to stop the tape. Invariably I switched it off. It has been my experience that once the machine was switched off, the same people would pass on interesting information off the record.

It would have been impracticable to publish all the transcripts that have been made. I have selected the most significant parts, some of which are reproduced in this chapter verbatim. I have left out irrelevant parts of the conversation and repetitions.

As indicated above, the interviews have been divided into two categories: the civilians and the Vietnam veterans. I will discuss the civilians, by far the larger group, first.

I. THE CIVILIANS

(i) MARTHA JANE WILLIAMS (white)

North Washington Avenue, lined with a variety of traditional Tennessee trees, including tulip poplar, dogwood, magnolia, black walnut, and pin oak, and lined also with the sidewalks and wired telephone poles that are the connection with the rest of the country, is one of Brownsville's main arteries that going south will either sweep you round the courthouse in a partial or complete circle or if your journey is to the north, take you away from it. Since the opening of the Eisenhower Interstate Highway system, most of the traffic bypasses Brownsville, and North Washington Avenue has assumed a more Southern quality. Its relatively peaceful atmosphere fits the mostly beautiful homes, at least one of them belonging to the ante-bellum era.

Martha Jane Williams lives in an elegant, white structured home halfway down the Avenue, down from the courthouse square. She is a charming lady in her seventies with a noticeable West Tennessee accent. She said, "I came in '46. Came right after the Second World War. My husband marched off into the Second World War." Martha Jane had never felt an outsider in Brownsville, because it is very like towns in Mississippi. "And my family is from Mississippi. Very alike."

VOOGT: In what way?
WILLIAMS: Well, closed, church-oriented, politics, pride in the town. . . . After Phil (Mr. Phillip Williams, deceased) came back from the war and we were coming back into West Tennessee, I had gone home in Mississippi and stayed with my family, because he was gone three and a half years. He volunteered for the service. Had a child and therefore was not subject to the draft. I did not know he had volunteered until he was gone. He did not tell (chuckling) and I don't blame him because he would not have had to have dodged the Germans for it, I would have killed him on the spot (more chuckling). Which is probably the reason he did not tell. But, anyway, he was in that invasion of North Africa, Sicily, and Italy.

A cousin of Martha Jane's mother had been the Methodist minister of Brownsville. Martha Jane remembered hearing her relatives talk about Brownsville at family gatherings at Christmastide, saying how much they liked the city. It was this that persuaded her to go and look at the town with her husband. She wanted a small town. She said, "I wanted a traditional kind of town; I wanted church. I wanted those things. Had an excellent school system. It had review clubs, book clubs, and it had an active church, everything. And people who defend it." She went on to say that she was the only newcomer that they had had "in forever".

To explain what kind of town Brownsville was, Martha Jane talked about a meeting of the Literary Society that she attended shortly after moving there. Ms. Marion, the president, said, "Now, we are very ingrown in Brownsville and we *must* be receptive to people who come our way. . . we must make them feel at home. So whenever we have a stranger who comes in, we must seek them out, be friendly, visit with them." She said that Dee West's mother-in-law replied to this, "Now, Marion, don't talk to me about going to see new people. Now, when you push me, it is a problem. Don't talk to me about going to see new people. I don't have time to visit the people I already know that I like." That was the kind of society Martha Jane and her husband moved into in 1946.

VOOGT: That still applies now?
WILLIAMS: It still applies in a certain class. Now, there are a lot of people who have moved, but the whole has not changed. And some of their descendants have inherited [it]. But, fortunately, new blood has come in (chuckling).

We wandered over several other topics. We talked about Tennessee and other Southern states. Martha Jane then said, "Brownsville is like Mississippi. Not Tennessee; but Brownsville is very like - and I think it is

because it is an agricultural [community] with a high black population. Both of the things make it like Mississippi, in-grown, few people controlling the money. And that's the way it is."

On the Vietnam War:

> VOOGT: Somebody told me, now, correct me if I'm wrong, that in Marceline's Beauty Parlor, the women would talk during the Vietnam War years about how to get deferments and who would get them. They would talk about their sons and what worried them.
> WILLIAMS: That was just a certain group. It was not the general - most of the people did not have any involved -, of a certain clan and that sounds (pause) hard. I don't mean it to sound that.

On deferments:

> VOOGT: Earlier you said [something about] the people who went to Vietnam; all the people who should have fought that war somehow did not end up doing that. Can you explain that?
> WILLIAMS: Well, that is simply because they knew there were ways to stay out.
> VOOGT: Other people who went could not stay out?
> WILLIAMS: Because they did not know not to. Most people went to school [college or university] that had no intention of going to school at all and they would get an educational deferment or they would be required on the farm and this was the absurd thing: they hadn't worked a day in their lives and all of a sudden, they were needed on the farm.

It was obvious that deferments were controversial. Martha Jane said that if you had enough money and the right connections you could avoid being drafted. We passed on to the Vietnam War itself. Martha Jane said that she did not feel the impact of the war until Helen Veirs' son was about to go. (Helen was a close friend). What she said next was very important to her: "Everything must be personalized for it to really come across."

> WILLIAMS: I knew that we had been in the Vietnam War. I knew all sorts and kinds of things, because somehow it really never had been true until I knew that one young man who was going; and the distress of his mother, who is not given to public distress at all. And she came by here and we sat in her car and she was telling me that

Tom was going to Vietnam; and I have never seen her that distressed; and then I began to realize what this war really was. And prior to that it had been somebody else's war.

VOOGT: Before that it was something on television?

WILLIAMS: Yes, or the newspaper. I am an avid reader. But I did not know anybody who had gone, and there were a handful. Now I think this with Tom is an exception, and there are one or two people that I know of that are exceptions, but it seemed to me, and I don't know whether this is accurate, but it seemed to me that this war was fought by the people who had the least to defend.

VOOGT: What do you mean by that?

WILLIAMS: Well, it has always been my opinion that if you have extensive property, you should be the one going marching off to war to defend it. And it seemed to me the Vietnam War more than any that I have ever read about or known about, the people who had the least to defend were the ones who were being marched off to war. So that put me in a defensive position before it ever started. Of course, I don't think we ever should have been there at all, at all. From everything that I have read, and personally I don't think there is any question but that the Vietnam War was the beginning of the disastrous drug problem. . . . Then the fact that we lost it, now you could declare a thing a victory if you want to, but you lose the war, as any fool knows. . . . The lack of respect to the veterans coming back is an absolute blot on this country, in my opinion. I think it is a blot. They did not declare, they were not responsible, they did what they could, they came home and nobody paid any attention to the fact that they had ever done a thing, as opposed to tickertape parades and confetti, and marching down the street. Oh, I think it is just. . . I don't want to talk about the Vietnam War!

We were getting towards the end of the interview when Martha Jane said, "Now, when somebody told me, told a group of us that you were doing something on the Vietnam War, did you know. . . this was a big group socially, and everybody just looked perfectly blank and they said, "Why, I did not know anybody that was involved in the Vietnam War. That was the general. . . . It was as if it had never been!" When asked if she could remember any names, there were only two that came to mind. Perhaps it is understandable that twenty-five years after the event Martha Jane could not recall the exact number of Haywood Countians who had been to Vietnam or who had been killed there.

Summing up, we find that Martha Jane Williams saw a close similarity between Brownsville and the plantation culture of the Mississippi of her early years. She came to Brownsville with her husband after World War II because it offered the kind of life with which she was familiar: church and

an active social life. Fifty years later she was able to say that nothing had really changed, which does seem to make Brownsville and Haywood County a conservative Southern community.

The aspect of the Vietnam War that touched her emotionally was the draft. She was convinced that the wrong young men were drafted. The people whose sons, according to her, should have been fighting in Vietnam, belonged to "a certain clan" who had the might and means to stay out of the war. Martha Jane's remarks confirm the idea that the Vietnam War was basically fought by the poor and uneducated. Another thing that upset her was the lack of respect for the Vietnam veterans, especially because in her case it contrasted with the ticker tape parades that welcomed her husband back after World War II.

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(ii) EARL RICE (black)

In his office at Haywood High School I talked to vice-principal Earl Rice, who was in his early fifties when I interviewed him. As I entered, he was just finishing talking to a student to evaluate a remark. We had met before and talked a little about personal matters, before moving on to the Vietnam War. Earl Rice had been drafted after graduation. As he put it, "They could not wait to swear us in." Students were allowed to come home for thirty days to take care of business. During that period of time they had what was called a medical. He was given a one-year deferment. When that ended he was given an educational deferment, lasting two years.

RICE: At the end of the two years, the war was ending and requiring large numbers of troops to go in and so I was free so to speak. I had no other problems. And so basically during that time it was different for me. I felt a little betrayed, because I had spent all of this time spending my money, time studying and working, trying to get an education and then as soon as I got out, I was to be drafted into Vietnam. I had mixed emotions. However, some of the friends who went to be examined, - take the physical exam, the same time I did - they later entered into the service and they were killed during the war. And to think that I could have been among that group if I had not gotten the medical deferment that I did. It was not that I was trying to get out of the war or anything. It was just the luck of the draw, because I was the only son at home. No

one else was at home with my mother and father and all my other brothers and sisters lived either away in New York, Chicago and way away, and they lived in Stanton.

We were involved in student protests. Many of the students felt that it was not a war that we were or should have been involved in. And we felt that the war should have been scaling down rather than escalating. It was a feeling that they were not trying to win the war.

The vice-principal of Haywood High School raised an interesting point. The majority of the local Vietnam veterans that I interviewed were convinced that the United States could have won the Vietnam War. Their arguments ranged from denouncing the policy of hit-and-run, which implied that you "surrendered" the land you had just conquered to the enemy - it also meant that there was no frontier, which to them seemed all wrong - to the claim that American planes were sent on bombing missions with just two bombs each instead of a full load, in order to increase on paper the number of missions flown. Secretary Robert McNamara's name was mentioned in connection with the war of statistics, which was condemned by the fighting men as futile. Earl Rice went on to talk about student protests at Lane College.[134] There had not been any major riots; it had been, what he called, more of a vocal silent-type protest, which meant that although the students made themselves heard, it was done in a dignified way. Picket signs were used once in a while.

On deferments:

An ingenious sort of protest was used by some students: to stay out of the war, they got married.

RICE: You had to marry prior to going in.
VOOGT: Did that change at all?
RICE: No, it lasted pretty much throughout the Vietnam War. They continued that after I left school as far as I know. I know it was a popular thing going on during that time, because guys were getting married and taking wives. They said, "Well, let's go on and get married." And so many of them did and that was an automatic deferment during that particular time. [This is not quite accurate; the Selective Service Classifications list for the 1948-1976 period indicates that a deferment was granted to registrants who were married with one child or more].
VOOGT: There was no other possibility?
RICE: If you continued your education in college. But what they did was they caught a lot of college students between graduation and graduate school. So it made it very difficult to do that because,

you see, I graduated in June and I was called for, to report for my physical examination, written exams and all of that in July, July 8th. (After all these years Earl Rice remembered the exact date). I really had no time to apply for graduate school or anything beween that. So they caught us in-between.

He went on to say that he had received the medical deferment in July or on August 1st. He applied to teach and was hired in September. "In actuality," he said, "I had my teaching and my medical deferment going concurrently at the same time the first year. Then the year after that the teaching deferment, the educational deferment, was utilized."

Meanwhile news from and about Vietnam was plentiful. "You could not avoid Vietnam," he said. "I mean, it was on the news. The body bags coming in, in 1967, 1968. They were shipping them home. It was on the nightly news, it was on local television, local radio stations. All the boys who were from Brownsville, Haywood County, the Jackson area, - they were giving an account of what was going on in their lives. The local papers were giving accounts of what was happening in Vietnam with the local boys." Earl Rice said that the local servicemen talked on the local radio; or their parents would talk on the issues regarding the Vietnam War at social gatherings of the church, and out in the community people would ask, "How is your son doing?"

On civil rights in Brownsville and Haywood County:

Perhaps the pivotal place in the black community is the church. On Sundays as well as on weekdays at church meetings and social gatherings, people would exchange news. Vietnam would almost naturally come up.

RICE: . . . you must remember that this was going on about the same time we were doing a lot of the civil rights protesting. Vietnam was going on and we were right in the midst of the civil rights movement in 1966, 1967, 1968. That was crucial in the civil rights movement. They were both running concurrent at the same time.

VOOGT: How did that go in Brownsville?

RICE: Brownsville was one of the hotbeds of the state of Tennessee. Brownsville, Haywood County, Summerville, Fayette County. During that time here it was very difficult. A very transitional time, especially for blacks. It was a hard time. We had a voter registration drive that was going on, trying to get the right to vote, because during that period of time in Haywood County, blacks were not allowed to vote. We did not have the right to vote. It was

not until 1960 that blacks gained the right to vote again in Haywood County. They had to go through a registration process. They had it back after the Civil War during the early time, but they had lost it over I don't know the exact period of time. I guess the late 1800s or the early 1900s, somewhere in that period of time. They had lost their right to vote and so this was a period of time with a lot of activities going on in the civil rights movement. We had meetings of Dr. King. I never recall him coming to Brownsville. Jesse Jackson came to Brownsville, Hosea Williams came to Brownsville during that period of time. We had a group that was called the Haywood County - Fayette Work Camp; that was a group of college students who came in to work voter registration during the summers. They came from colleges across the North, out of the West. They came here and they worked during the summer and we canvassed the whole county, preparing people for voter registration and this lasted from the late 1950s until 1970. This school was built in 1970. This was the first integrated setting. We had what was known as "Freedom of Choice" in Haywood County. "Freedom of Choice" meant that you had the option to send your child into an integrated setting or not to, and it was very sparingly that parents would undertake the tremendous burden. They were not accepted. I think we started out with approximately six or eight high school students going through integration, freedom of choice.

VOOGT: And then they would go to?

RICE: To the previous all-white high school which was Haywood High School at that time. There was one at College Hill. And the all-black high school here at that time was called Carver High School. That was over on Jefferson Street, where the current Board of Education is. The current Board of Education housed what was the Science Wing of Carver High School.

Rice went on to describe the difference that was made by the integrated school. He believed that the new high school was the success that it was, because no one could lay claim to the building, which was totally new. The whites could not say to the blacks that they were infringing on their new building, and the blacks could not tell the whites that they were coming into their school, infringing on their rights. Everybody moved into the new building at the same time, which made it a much better situation. Earl Rice sincerely believed that what also helped was that there was a new private school, the Tennessee Academy. It was "the hard core students" that attended the new private school. "Their parents were not in favor of integration and it gave them an out." He said that as a result there was less racial violence. The private school only lasted nine or ten years, after which parents who wanted their children to attend private schools, sent them to Jackson or Memphis.

One of the major factors that happened during that time, according to Earl Rice, was that blacks and whites opened up a dialogue. A second important factor at the time was the educational level of blacks living in the Haywood County area. He went on to speak of Tent City.[135]

RICE: We had what we called a Tent City in Haywood and Fayette County. The reason they called it Tent City was because they evicted the people from their homes and the only place they had to live was in those canvas tents. They evicted them because they were registering to vote.
VOOGT: And they were renting those houses?
RICE: They were sharecroppers. Many of them. And so when they were forced off the land of the white man, [they moved to the land] that was owned by blacks, [who] provided homes for them to live, the tents on the land, until they could get houses built. Until they were able to buy land from blacks, a half acre or an acre of land. All of these things helped it stabilize simply because of the fact that the land - much of the land was owned by Fayette County that had a tougher time. They had a larger Tent City. Lasted a longer period of time. The one in Haywood County only lasted for probably six or eight months. Fayette lasted into a year and a half, two years.
VOOGT: It went through the winter?
RICE: It gained national fame, the one in Fayette County. It was nationally known, because it was a thing that brought the national news media in - ABC - and they covered those stories on the Tent Cities here in Haywood County and in Fayette County over in Summerville. We had both running together.

Earl Rice returned to the subject of the Vietnam War, shifting from civil rights back to the war. "There were mixed emotions about the war," he said, "because many people felt that a tremendous number of young black Americans were being drafted into Vietnam." The over-representation of blacks in the Armed Forces during the Vietnam War is a controversial subject. Recent scholarly writing on this aspect of the war does not focus on the high percentage of blacks drafted during the Vietnam War era; instead, much has been written on the unfairness of the draft, which put uneducated young men and those from poor families at a disadvantage. In a recent book on the Vietnam War the subject of how the draft affected young blacks is ignored. Instead it offers an extensive discussion of the Vietnam Summer, the 1967 coalition of liberals, radicals and New Leftists.[136] In the summer of 1967 anti-war demonstrants traveled to the cities to raise an anti-war sentiment. The organizers attempted to expand opposition to the Vietnam War from college students to working-class young people, who were more likely to be

drafted into military service.[137] *Oliver North Returns to Vietnam: One More Mission*, also mentions the grossly unfair process by which people were selected to participate in the Vietnam War, but does not distinguish between the different races. Instead it emphasizes that poorer Americans universally served.[138]

Arnold R. Isaacs, in *Vietnam Shadows: The War, Its Ghosts, and Its Legacy*, has some interesting statistics on the draft, but has nothing to say about the over representation of blacks in the Vietnam War. "Of the nearly twenty-seven million American men who reached draft age between 1964 and 1973, only 40 percent served in the military. Of those, only about 25 percent went to Vietnam, representing just one-tenth of the draft-age male population. Among the college-educated ... the percentage was far lower."[139] Vice-principal Earl Rice said that he thought that records showed that perhaps disproportionately more blacks were killed in Vietnam. I asked him why this should be so?

> RICE: The reasons I do not know. I do not have the answer to all of those. They had no means of getting out of the war. [The rich] went to Canada, they had legal deferments, they had medical deferments, and many of them that did not take those, they moved out of the country or they just refused to go! Where on the other hand we really did not have the opportunity or we did not have the choices. So we had to face the music by going into Vietnam. I suppose that would be one of the major reasons why there are the disproportionate numbers of blacks - I suppose also that the records show that you had a large number that volunteered, because they felt they were getting a better life out of the South by going into the military. It was a way out of poverty, the hard times. Many of them had already gone in prior to the war. They were already in and then they, at that particular time, I think, were locking you in for four years.

We turned to the local Draft Board. He said that if people went for a deferment, they had to go before a committee. And he added, "there were no blacks serving on those Draft Boards."[140]

> VOOGT: Never?
> RICE: Not at that particular time.
> VOOGT: And during later years?
> RICE: The later years, probably about 1980, 1981, 1982, I can't remember. You remember Ray [Dixon] served on it. He taught here at the high school. He came on the Draft Board late 1980s or early 1990s, and he was probably one of the first that I know to serve on

the Draft Board in Haywood County.
You would have to be nominated to serve on it. Not having the right to vote or anything of that, you were not going to be nominated for a position to serve on the Draft Board, because it was a political thing.
VOOGT: You all felt that was unfair.
RICE: Yes, it was totally unfair. If you are going for a deferment and you have these people make the decision on, you know, basically whether you go into the service or not. And often times did not quite understand the situations.

We wandered over several other topics, and then the realities of the present intruded upon our discussion of the things of the past. A buzzer sounded and the excited laughter and talk of students penetrated the serene atmosphere of the vice-principal's study. A student needed to see him.

For Earl Rice the Vietnam War era was a pivotal period during which the civil rights protest demonstrations and the war coincided. It was clear to him that the American government was not trying to win the War in Vietnam. At his college in Jackson, Tennessee, there were quiet student protests, which was in keeping with the way anti-war demonstrations were organized on other Southern campuses. According to Rice there was a feeling in the black community that a very large number of young blacks was drafted into Vietnam. Rice also thought that a disproportionate number of blacks was killed in Vietnam. At the same time he found it difficult to pinpoint the reasons for this. He suggested that the blacks who were drafted did not have the means to stay out of the war, but he also showed himself aware of the popularity of a military career among blacks as a way out of poverty.

In talking about civil rights protests and the Vietnam War, Rice did not connect the two, i.e. he did not say that the Vietnam War had an effect on race relations; he merely pointed out that the two were going on simultaneously. Rice mentioned that Brownsville was one of the [civil rights] hotbeds of the state of Tennessee and pointed out that Jesse Jackson and Hosea Williams both visited Brownsville during the days when the local community was in turmoil.

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(iii) HAYDEN and HARBERT THORNTON, JR. (white)

Eating out is one of the pivotal activities in West Tennessee. It is quite common to make a two-hour journey to eat BBQ at Bozo's, an inconspicuous, yet famous, restaurant known by all Southerners from Paducah, Kentucky to Oxford, Mississippi, and beyond. On a bright sunny day in July, Harbert Thornton, Jr., and his wife Hayden, both in their seventies, invited me for lunch. We traveled to a new restaurant, about an hour away from Brownsville which they had recently discovered. As we drove along the country roads of Haywood County, past fields of soybeans, corn, and cotton, we talked about the South and the Vietnam War.

Harbert talked about the first settlers, who came from North Carolina and Virginia. One of the first settlers, a Mr. Bond, was the richest man of Tennessee and owned six hundred slaves. For white people in the South, life was pretty genteel up till the Civil War, which changed everything. He said, "I do not know how many of our young men were lost, but it hit every family, of course." After the Civil War, "with the change of the slavery system", farmers could no longer produce the same amount of cotton they had been able to raise before with all their free help. He said that some black families chose to remain. "They did not have anywhere to go." Yet, they only did if they had a good relationship with their former owners. They would stay on the plantation and they would be paid.

> VOOGT: They did not become sharecroppers then?
> Harbert THORNTON: Well, that is a bit of a hard term to define. A sharecropper raises the crops on the shares and the landowner furnishes the land and their equipment and the mules, and a place to live. So, I suppose that was a healthy step for the ones that wanted to go that route. They were independent. They were given so many acres for cotton and their families chopped it and gathered it and they raised their hogs for meat and had a milk cow and they had a calf they killed once a year. And they were free in that sense of the word and treated right. I suppose the ones that really wanted to move to the cities or just go somewhere were the ones that did not feel like they had been treated fairly or properly.

He went on to say that he had had seven families on his farm. They had their own equipment and worked "spot" and just rented x-numbers of acres. They rented what they thought they could work. "That is what you call tenant farming. Probably had it in our area more than the great plantations down in the Delta of Louisiana," where the blacks worked on

a share cropper basis or for daily wages. "You were trying to work five or ten thousand acres, you would need a lot of help at times. That was their way of doing it. There probably was not any other way."

> VOOGT: What would be your answer to the question, "Tell me about the South?"
> Hayden THORNTON: Well, of course, I would think the warmth and friendliness in the South is very important, and the hospitality. People take tremendous pride in their homes, their yards, and they want that to be evident, you know, what they do. And we do have some of the loveliest architecture, and lovely homes anywhere.

She added that Southerners love to entertain, love cooking, and love delicious and attractive food. Southerners love parties. We talked about several other topics, then moved on to Vietnam.

On the Vietnam War:

Hayden did not remember having many serious thoughts about it, until she had a son who was reaching the age of the draft. At the time she was busy with her family, and it was not a worldwide war. She went on to say that the war had been going on so long then that they were beginning to feel they were not getting anywhere with it. She felt it was a stalemated situation and that "it was not the way our country had always dealt with war." The reality of the war hit them when their cousin Norman Lane was killed in action. "That brought it home very real to us."

> VOOGT: Did you notice when other local boys were sent to Vietnam?
> Hayden THORNTON: That is the problem. The ones in college did not go. That's what our son did the whole time.
> Harbert THORNTON: They all knew that if they went to college, they would not have to go to Vietnam.
> VOOGT: But they could not stay in college forever.
> Harbert THORNTON: Four years.
> Hayden THORNTON: I expect Taylor (their son) was kind of near the end of the war when he reached that age.
> Harbert THORNTON: I don't know if he had a personal friend drafted, see, they were all in college.

Then Harbert referred to the Civil War practice of hiring somebody to fight for you, which must be a universal phenomenon. When, for example,

Napoleon drafted young men of fighting age in Holland nearly two hundred years ago to fight in Russia, the rich were able to find poor young men to take their places in exchange for a sum of money. Harbert stressed that it was done in the North during the Civil War. I asked him about the South. He said, "We'll never know. Can you imagine hiring a guy, and you saying, 'Here, I'll give you $ 100,- to go take my son's place.'" Then, connecting the Civil War and the Vietnam War, he said, "That's about what we did. We turned around and did the same thing in the Vietnam War." That was what the practice of keeping young men in college, came down to, he argued.

When the war was over and they saw "the POW thing" on television, they felt it was awful that the United States had to suffer something like that, and "not have any end results to it". Harbert concluded, "I think that was the saddest for everybody."

What transpires from the interview with Hayden and Harbert Thornton is their sense of history. Their point of reference is the Civil War, "which changed everything". Other than the Vietnam War, which because of the unfair draft system, hurt relatively few families, the Civil War "hit every family" in the South. A further example of the Thorntons' sense of history is provided by Harbert's comments on the draft during the Vietnam War, which he felt was as wrong as the practice in the North during the Civil War of "hiring somebody to fight for you". The Thorntons see the Vietnam War within the context of the Civil War, and it is this that is reflected in Southern writing, notably in the Vietnam War literature of Southern writers.

(iv) MARGARET KIZER (white)

Margaret Kizer is one of the mainstays of the city of Brownsville. She "invented" City Beautiful, a committee of volunteers, who take enormous pride in the city, keep it clean, take care of flowerbeds, and so on. In her seventies, she still worked for the Chamber of Commerce. Husband Jerry Kizer is a World War II veteran, who fought at Iwo Jima.

We first talked about Owen Burgess, the editor of the *Brownsville States-Graphic* during the Vietnam War, and a cousin of hers. A POW in Germany during World War II, he was decidedly a Democrat. He wrote his own column, which had much humor in it.

Brownsville was very special, Margaret said. Being older than Memphis, it had historical significance. It did not grow because it was not directly on the river (the Mississippi) as Memphis was. Then she said, "I hate to say it is Southern because it had so many slaves. But the original people here [were] settlers; one man had more slaves than anybody in

Tennessee and they worked the land. A lot of people tell you that's one of the big differences in Brownsville." In the past the farmers of the West Tennessee cotton belt heavily depended on slave labor. Historically, then, the presence of slaves certainly made Brownsville a Southern town. But I wanted to know what made Brownsville a Southern town in the nineteen nineties. "Just the culture; and it has not changed too much." She explained, "The closeness of the families and the values that we cherish." The values she meant were spirituality, family, and close connections.

On the Vietnam War:

The Vietnam War did not mean much to her, because she did not have anybody in it.

On the Civil War:

We passed on to other subjects and we discussed a new monument in Mississippi. She said, "that really makes you want to go back and read more about the Civil War." (This was on the basis of the new monument in a park in Vicksburg, commemorating the battle of Vicksburg). She continued:

> Either the Daughters of the Confederacy or one of those groups put up, raised the money for it, so that's one thing, and we were so glad to see it. And it is in the shape of Tennessee, up on a beautiful hill. It is beautiful to go down there. They have resurrected a ship that was sunk at the battle of Vicksburg. You see all about that, and then they tell you about the battle of Vicksburg. Like I said, it makes you want to go back and study about it. And what a time they had. It makes you so sad to know that brother fought against brother for no real reason, you know. I mean there was a reason at that time; that they [had] slavery, but someone said to me, 'Well, the North brought the slaves, got them to begin with, and then brought them down to the South, then they fought us over the slaves.'"
>
> VOOGT: Brought them from the North? Where would they come in?
>
> KIZER: I was not familiar enough with the history of the North.

What Margaret Kizer shares with many residents of Brownsville is a sense of pride. She is proud of the physical appearance of the community of which she is a part and for which she feels responsible and is actively involved in enhancing its prosperity and preserving it for future generations. She bears witness to the Southern spirit which ultimately

goes back to the plantation culture of the antebellum period, which she shares with a certain group of whites in the region, characterized by a strong sense of pride. It is an attitude reflected in the major regional newspapers published in Memphis and Jackson, Tennessee, and is perhaps best defined as pride in Southern culture. Typically, Margaret is well versed in the history of the county and in Southern history. Typically, again, the Vietnam War in her case is dwarfed by the war that was fought a hundred years earlier, as evidenced by her fascination with the recently built Civil War monument in Vicksburg. This is contrasted by her dismissal of the Vietnam War as a conflict that meant nothing to her, as no-one close to her was involved in it.

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(v) MARCELINE JACOCKS (white)

For many years Marceline Jacocks owned a beauty parlor next to the Ritz theater, just off the square, across from the courthouse. I had known her for some ten years, when she visited our home in the wooded rolling hills of Birmingham, Alabama. Friendly, generous, and kind-hearted are the best words to describe her. She is also a great talker; and she had much to say about the Vietnam War. First of all she pointed out that right up to the time we were speaking, people were "very, very emotional about this issue". In fact it was very emotional for her to talk about it. Reaching back in her memory she discussed the American presidents of the Vietnam War era. In other interviews I had found that nobody really loved president Johnson. Most Haywood Countians I met strongly disliked him. This is what Marceline had to say about him, "But, Johnson... president Johnson was the one who escalated it, and he was just despised because he was just sending men over there for no reason. No one could understand what was going on, because it was not like the German war where we fought in World War II, where you could recognize the enemy. - You could not recognize the enemy in Vietnam, because they had women and children killing our men over there. Even the children."

Her words were reminiscent of the scene, at the beginning of *Apocalypse Now*, where a helicopter descends on a village square and American soldiers are seen helping the natives, and a Vietnamese child blows up the helicopter, soldiers and all. The fact that little Vietnamese children were seen as enemies also comes up in discussions about My Lai, where it is sometimes mentioned as an argument to account for the atrocity.

Back in the 1960s everybody was saying, "Why are we over there?"

Marceline added, "So, why would you volunteer your son to go?" During the Vietnam War, consequently, people were not as patriotic as during World War II. In the 1940s war people even wanted their sons to fight for their country.

> JACOCKS: Because they saw why they were going, the reason to go. But, in this so-called undeclared war no-one could understand the reason why we were there, because the French had just pulled out. They had been there, what, six years?
> VOOGT: Longer than that.
> JACOCKS: With no conclusion to why they were there. They pulled out.

She then went on to talk about the deepening American involvement after the French had left. Asked whether she had been aware of developments at the time, she replied that it was all on the news. She had two children in college. "I was so wrapped up in working and keeping my children in college that I did not get involved in the politics of it." However, she was aware that the American involvement in Vietnam was questionable, "as to Johnson's wisdom on the matter".

Vietnam still weighed heavily on her mind. It was obvious that she still closely followed the news about it, and did not miss a thing. She asked me, "Did you see that in the news about two or three weeks ago where Robert McNamara went to Vietnam?" She regretted that she had not brought the paper from Florida, where she lived at the time of the interview. She resumed, "All these years he has been out, he has questioned whether the episode really happened! They are questioning now whether this Gulf of Tonkin, whether the episode even happened! And that makes it more heartbreaking." Marceline believed the newspaper report in *The Daily Commercial* from Leesburg, Florida, that said president Johnson knew what really happened.

> JACOCKS: During the war they were drafting the boys to go. Nobody really wanted to volunteer. There were some, a few that did volunteer, but most of them had to be drafted to go, because nobody wanted to go.

Off-hand she mentioned two young men who had been killed: Larry Land and Danny Overton. Danny had been in her son's class at school. She thought he might have been drafted, because "the government had this rule that if you were in college, you did not have to go." As a consequence everybody "joined up to go to college" to keep from going

to Vietnam.

> JACOCKS: Then they (the U.S. government) decided that was unfair, because there were so many that were not capable of going to school. So they declared that unfair. So then, the next law they made they said that if you were in a National Guard unit you were exempt. So everybody was trying to get their sons enrolled in the National Guard to keep them from going. Needless to say the National Guards filled up and they could not take anymore. And even our governor of the state of Tennessee, which was Frank Clement at that time, had a son, and he's our son's age too. He was that age to be drafted. The National Guard in Nashville got filled up and he pulled rank over a group in Memphis and enrolled his son down at Memphis; and he would drive it. You have to go once a month to the meeting.

Marceline's husband Solon then said that a lot of young men volunteered. The problem was that there were not enough volunteers, which was why they needed the draft. Marceline went on to say that when the unfairness of the draft was recognized in Washington, they came up with the lottery and numbers and they would draw the names. "They started at the low end of the scale like one, and my son drew 325, which was one of the higher numbers." (This was good; in 1969, for example, the highest lottery number for the group born from 1944 through 1950, was 195). With the new lottery system you had to go when your number came up, even if you were in college." Solon and Marceline Jacocks had also tried to keep their son out of Vietnam.

> JACOCKS: We tried to get our son into - You did not feel at all unpatriotic about what you were doing, because you did not want your son to go get killed needlessly.
> VOOGT: You all felt this was a different war.
> JACOCKS: It was totally different. But anyway, we tried to get our son in the Naval Air. And, unfortunately, our son's eyes were not 20/20. They were 20/40. So, he could not get into that. But we were not the only people doing it. Everybody was trying to keep their sons from going. They were doing whatever they could and if they could pull rank, they were doing it.

As an example she mentioned someone who had an appointment with her in her beauty parlor and used her telephone to call one of the state representatives in Washington. "She cried and just begged him on the

phone to just please do something to keep her son from going."

When the war was at its worst, anti-war demonstrators were arrested on suspicion of communist sympathies. Many of these men defected to Canada, despite the certain knowledge that they could never return to the United States.

> JACOCKS: . . . they will be prosecuted if they come back. But then they ended the war. I say they ended the war. It has been a mystery to this day as to how it was ended. Because Nixon said when he was running for office, "If you'll just elect me...," It is just as plain, I can hear him saying it right now. He said, "If you will elect me for your president, I can end this war." So the other ones who were running against him said, "Well, there are men there who will be killed between now and if you get elected, so why not tell us how to end this war now?" And he never would say a thing about what he intended to do. But he was elected and when he got in as president, he ended that war. And to this day nobody knows how he ended it. And you just wonder what concessions he really did make to end that war.

Did Marceline Jacocks feel that Nixon was honest? "He was smart and not a crook like Johnson. Johnson had no feeling at all that those men were being killed over there." She argued that people despised Johnson. She passed on to post-war feelings about the Vietnam War in America. ("It really tore this country apart.") Returning again to their efforts to keep their son out of the war, she repeated that she did not feel bad about doing whatever she did to keep him out. In the end the war ended before his number came up. She explained the lack of patriotic feelings during the Vietnam War by calling it strictly a politicians' war. This was not a local but a national feeling. To emphasize her point she mentioned that the Vietnam War Memorial Wall in Washington D.C. "was put together by the veterans for themselves. They made money themselves and put that wall there." Marceline's dislike of Washington politics shone through when she added that it took president Reagan six months "before he made his presence known at that wall. And he only did it then under pressure". She was convinced that the Wall had a healing effect on the nation.

The discussion then moved to the veterans. She remembered that *The Commercial Appeal* out of Memphis ran a series of articles on veterans. Since there was a VA Hospital in Memphis it was not illogical for the paper to write about wounded soldiers who had been sent to the Veterans Hospital. One article stood out in her mind vividly. It was about a young man whose picture in the paper showed the nicest young man in there. Both of his legs had been blown off. They asked him if he would volunteer again if he could. "And he said, 'Are you crazy? Look at me. I

have no legs.'" Her story evoked *Fortunate Son*, the Pulitzer Prize winning autobiography of Lewis B. Puller, Jr., who lost both legs in a booby-trap incident in Vietnam.

Solon and Marceline both visited the Vietnam War Monument in Washington D.C. They scratched off Danny Overton's name to take back to his parents, and also brought back Bob and Beverley Johnston's son's name. "Nineteen years old. Their only son. And they just sat there and just cried." As they were getting ready to travel on the road, Marceline concluded, "And that was just the way it affected our family and our life."

The interview with Marceline Jacocks focused on the War in Vietnam, narrowed down to the one aspect of the draft law from the point of view of a mother whose son was eligible for the draft during the Vietnam War era. A quarter of a century after the end of the war her anguish could still be detected. Her account points to the basic unfairness of the draft; it shows that the sons of those who had might and means basically did not serve in Vietnam.

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(vi) COUNTY COMMISSIONER FRANKLIN SMITH (white)

In his spacious office at the courthouse in Brownsville, County Commissioner Franklin Smith talked freely about the draft and Vietnam.

His father, a veteran of World War II and very patriotic, had served on the Draft Board. The different opinions Franklin Smith and his father had about the Vietnam War, illustrated the typical generation conflict of those days. His father had joined the service in World War II as soon as he got out of high school and went to Europe. Not until the late seventies did the commissioner's father "come around" and agree with his son that there was no comparison between Vietnam and World War II. "He thought people who went to Canada and dodged the draft were unpatriotic people. It was just a funny situation for people of his generation to understand why people of my generation were not knocking doors down joining to go to Vietnam and fight the war that we did not believe in. He did not understand that."

Franklin Smith was a student at Mississippi State when he had to go to Memphis to take a physical examination. He was declared A-1, the top priority in the draft, and "scared to death" that he was going to be drafted. He said that he did not know what he would do if he was drafted. "Whether I would go to Canada, whether I would go to Vietnam, what I would do." This was the time when student deferments had been done away with and the government was drafting people out of college.

We passed on to the local veterans. At Veterans Day celebrations the absence of Korean and Vietnam veterans was noticeable; the only people supporting veterans' organizations were the World War II veterans. This was because of the way they were treated when they came home from the war. "The World War II veterans have a special camaraderie among themselves that Korea veterans and Vietnam veterans never had." It made sense. "They (World War II veterans) came home as a group and they came home as heroes, and Korea and Vietnam veterans did not. They came home individually, you know, they served a year, they came home, and they were despised by, especially, young people." Although this was not the feeling in Haywood County, they were not looked upon as heroes, as they were for World War II. Franklin Smith said, "Vietnam veterans, when they came back, they just kind of came back. I mean, it was not any great welcome or anything. Of course, their family appreciated them being back and their friends did, but as far as the community, they did not do much."

Comparing the Gulf War and the Vietnam War, he thought that the Vietnam War had gone on too long. "And people saw it, I mean, we were not over there to win the war, you know. They would take some land one day and give it back the next and retake it." In the case of the Gulf War, the American public pulled together.

Here it was again: Franklin Smith, together with a few other civilians, and many Vietnam veterans that I talked to, were quite certain that the United States could have won the war if it had wanted to, in contradistinction to official history, which generally states the opposite. Are the Haywood Countians who feel that the North Vietnamese could have been defeated holding on to a myth, then?

On anti-war protests:

Franklin Smith had been involved in anti-war protests at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville.

VOOGT: There were protests there?
SMITH: All the time. Especially after Kent State.
VOOGT: And you all took part in that.
SMITH: Right.
VOOGT: What did you do?
SMITH: Mostly just had a march. Left the campus and went into downtown Knoxville.

The public in Knoxville tended to ignore the protesting students. They still as a group had not turned against the war as they did later in Nixon's years. In 1973 the American public just demanded that the U.S. get out of

Vietnam. Under president Johnson the war was still a good thing to the older generation of Americans, who did not question the government. "It took four or five years to the older generation that the war was not about patriotism and protecting America. It was basically an economic war. We were there for all the wrong reasons."

On the South:

> SMITH: People from the South were a little more patriotic for a longer period of time. There were fewer protests on college campuses in the South than there were in the West. Probably your biggest protest came out of the West or the Northeast and the least amount in the South. I went to Mississippi State for two years. I don't remember a Vietnamese war protest at Mississippi State.
> VOOGT: How do you account for the patriotism in the South?
> SMITH: People supported government more, did not question what was going on in government. People as a general rule are more respectful of authority in the South than they are in the other areas of the country. You know, we say, "Yes, ma'am," and "No, ma'am." We just, we are taught to respect authority, and the government was the ultimate authority and when they said we needed to be there, we did not question that authority. I just think it is just a history, more history of our location in the country; we are just a more respectful people. Most of the people in the South are born and raised in the South, whereas in other areas of the country they came in from somewhere else. They were imports, they, you know -, that was before the migration state of Florida. Florida is different from Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, and Tennessee. But people were born and raised here, stayed here, and they were just more rooted in this area than say in California or New York or Illinois or somewhere.

Franklin Smith discussed the generation gap between the veterans of World War II and their sons, who were eligible for the draft during the Vietnam War era. The difference between the South and the rest of America was also evident on Southern campuses where there were fewer protests than elsewhere. Smith saw this as the consequence of patriotism, which is more prevalent in the South than in the rest of the country.

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(vii) DR. TOMMY and PAMELA RUSSELL (white)

I have known Dr. Thomas D. Russell III and his wife Pamela since 1986. Pam was elected to the Haywood County Commission that same year; Tommy and son Thomas D. Russell IV, just like his father and he himself did before, practice dental surgery in a beautifully designed, recently built office at Peach Plaza, in the vicinity of the courthouse. The annual Fourth of July parties at their home are famous in Brownsville, as are the Christmas parties, when a huge, decorated Christmas tree reaches for the lofty ceiling of their home.

Asked for comments on the information on the project that I had mailed them, Tommy said, "I did notice that you said Southerners were used to defeat and I disagree with that. We are merely sadly acquainted with defeat; we're not used to it." And Pamela added, "We don't accept it very well." We turned to a comparison of the Civil War and the Vietnam War. I asked whether the two wars could be equated as bad experiences for Southerners?

> RUSSELL: There is a big difference there, because the Civil War in the South, I think, is still a proud war. It is a war of which the South, even though they were defeated, was proud. Often [Southerners] were proud of their heritage, proud for what they fought, proud of their homeland, and proud of the valiant effort that they made in that war. And the only regret was that they lost.
>
> The War in Vietnam was much different in that it was not a proud war. It was an imposed war against people that we did not know and against issues with which we were not familiar. [There is] no identity with the Vietnam War except through the experience of losing young men there. And the reasons why we were there were not ever clear and the cause is not necessarily even valid or just in our minds, so that there was emotion involving the Vietnam War in terms of its validity and even necessity to differentiate that war and the War Between the States.

Tommy remembered hearing about the Gulf of Tonkin incident, but he said that the level of involvement "that we were to be thrust into" was not clear. The rationale behind the war as presented to the American public was "one of being communism and that this was one of the major dominoes in the domino theory".

Some of his classmates were killed in Vietnam, and so he had thought much about the war. He said that in 1964 he was firmly in favor of supporting the war. "I was in favor of the war as it was stated to me. It was presented as a measure of one's patriotism here as to whether they

supported the war or not. I felt myself to be a patriot and, therefore, I must support this because it is an American effort."

On student protests:

Pamela said that they were the same age as the college students that were marching on Kent State. She remembered looking at them and thinking, "they are not like us". She thought they were hippies, and crazy. At Vanderbilt in Nashville, Tennessee, there had not been much protest. Tommy stated that Vanderbilt was so much more conservative than many institutions and for that reason students were not as vocal in their opposition. But, he added, "I opposed those who opposed the government. I still today disagree with the way in which they protested. I still believe firmly that violence is not the way to protest anything."

> RUSSELL: The reason the students in Kent State were killed or injured was because they were in violent protest and they were thrusting themselves against the security, which was the National Guard at the University and being as it was a violent, active protest, the Guard was being attacked. They were attacking the Guard, physically endangering them and, therefore, it was in my estimation not surprising that the Guard reacted, if nothing else, out of self protection, if not at least out of frustration.
>
> What I really find offensive is that the protest was a violent one. And to be surprised and indignant at receiving violence when you're dispensing it, is to me not understandable. I think if you want to protest peacefully and make your point and are in turn dealt with violently, then you have a cause to complain and to protest about your treatment. But if you are inflicting violence, then to receive it is to be expected.

Tommy believed that many mistakes were made in all different areas. It was a growing experience for the United States, but, as with any growing experience there was pain involved. "And this had a lot of pain."

On the impact of the Vietnam War on the country:

> RUSSELL: It was not until after the war was over some several years actually that people mellowed out a bit and began to discover that a lot of this may not have been necessary. Sadness has occurred because of the hurt that was inflicted on, not only the country, but the sons and daughters that were sent there. That's a whole separate national tragedy, that the soldiers that were loyal to the country and

risked their lives, were then ostracized by the country to which they returned.

VOOGT: Did the community here receive its veterans differently from the rest of the country?

RUSSELL: Better.

Pamela RUSSELL: I think that the South is more accepting of those people who returned, but at the same time I think that everybody wanted it to go away and they did not treat the Vietnam vets cruelly and all, but it is like, "let's just get on with our lives and we don't want to talk about it". And there is no hero's welcome so much. It is just, "Well, you're back, good. Get a job."

RUSSELL: It never was a popular war.

We wandered over some other subjects and then discussed the draft in Haywood County. Tommy said there were several volunteers from his class.

RUSSELL: We all took tests in high school. We all were required to take entrance exams for entrance into the military, placement exams, and we were all required to take physical exams for positioning to be drafted. I did all that. So, everyone was being prepared for it and several of the young fellows did volunteer. I don't recall them. I don't think they were considered odd at the time. I don't think so. But they never came back.

VOOGT: Did you have people here who left or went to Canada or tried any other means to stay out of Vietnam?

RUSSELL: I don't think so. To my knowledge, if there were, there sure were very few. I can't recall any. Most of the draft dodging that was done here was of a variety done by those who had connections, who were educated, or their families were very political and had power and they did not want their children going to Vietnam. I think just from the standpoint of being put in harm's way irrespective of the justness or rightness of the war. If they could keep their children out of any conflict, then they would and it was entirely possible politically to do that, if you knew the right people. There were cases of that and also, there was a great effort to engineer your education into the directions of exemption, because there were types of areas of education which would render you exempt from being drafted. So there were people who became interested in vocations that were exempt. In my case, I was exempt by going into dental school and being married with a child.

I think the [Draft] Board was rather strict in many instances of drafting and most of the exemptions went through political strings, through congressmen and such or through staying in medical school

or dental school. Some people would also join the National Guard as a means of honoring their country's request but without great risk.

We passed on to talk about a specific case, that of president Clinton. For instance, did Tommy Russell feel that Clinton was influenced by the Europeans? He answered that was possible. But went on to say, "We here did not hold those who were draft dodgers in very favorable light at all. Those that spoke against our government such as Jane Fonda, for example, were considered detestable."

Referring to Tom Silvia's claim that America could have won the war ("We should have nuked them out"), I asked him for his view on the subject. He replied that he thought it was a war that was much more difficult to win than was anticipated. He believed that an added problem was that the United States did not understand the war. He also believed it was just a learning experience. The Russells both felt that the effect of the Vietnam War movies was that they made them appreciate the veterans more. Tommy felt that within the military establishment there was a lack of recognition towards its veterans of the Vietnam War. He said, "The establishment is more inclined to brush under the rug and to ignore the problems of its veterans who were from the Vietnam era than from any other conflict." Pamela Russell said that the veterans received poor treatment in the Veterans Hospitals. And Tommy called the treatment "not honorable".

Summing up, we find that both Tommy and Pamela experience history in the spirit of Allen Tate's "Ode to the Confederate Dead". They basically view the Civil War as a proud war. Pride is also the word that best describes their feelings about Southern culture. Being patriotic they supported the Vietnam War at the time, because it was official government policy. College students themselves during the Vietnam War era, they disagreed with the violent protests of certain groups of students. Also, they were aware of all the details of draft dodging that was going on during the Vietnam War, but had no sympathy for those who evaded the draft. They both thought that the South treated the returning Vietnam veterans better than the rest of the country. In their opinion the movies about the War on Vietnam had a healing effect on the nation which showed in an increased respect for the veterans.

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(viii) GORDON PERRY (white)

In his office at Haywood High School I talked to principal Gordon Perry, who was a successful football coach before he was promoted to his present position. He was considered tough, but fair by both the black and the white students. He found out how much he was appreciated in Brownsville and Haywood County during the Gulf War, when he saw action in Saudi Arabia.

Gordon moves rather fast for a Southerner. This applies, first, literally to the way he walks, but he also is a quick thinker, impatient almost, but helpful. The walls of his office reflect his past life; sports trophies and Army posters and plaques cover the walls and spill over on his desk. He told me he had been in Ft. Bragg, North Carolina, and got out of the Army in 1963, after which he obtained a teaching position in Kentucky, where he stayed for three years, staying in the Reserves simultaneously. For some reason his unit did not get activated for Vietnam. He came to Brownsville in 1966 and stayed in the Reserves until 1974. He was "out" from 1974 until 1984 and got back in the Guards, because he needed to get his twenty years in for retirement. Talking about the time when his unit could have been called up for Vietnam, he said he was a 1st lieutenant in the 82nd Airborne Division, a good airborne-type unit. When he was in the Army it still was a volunteer thing.

On the Vietnam War:

The Vietnam War, Perry argued, would not have ended the way it did, if Washington had let the military people do what they wanted. He commented that they should have left it to the military personnel. "You know, it is almost like, almost, I would say, like letting an English teacher help the football coach develop his strategy for the football game on Friday night." He felt that what was wrong was that any major decision came from president Johnson and his advisers. Perry thought that for that reason general Westmoreland could not really do what he wanted to do. Asked how people in Brownsville responded to the war, he replied that it was an accepted thing. "We did not have the anti-rebellious atmosphere as you saw in Los Angeles, the Kent State, you did not have that. You will find the South a little more patriotic."

On the South:

Gordon Perry talked about patriotism and explained why it was rather stronger in the South:

It is just the way you are raised. I was born and raised on everyone

> goes in the military for your country. You [do] your two years or four years or three years, but everyone is going to go in and that's what you do for your country. And I think it is just a little stronger in the South. A little more traditional roots. Not as much of an influx here as it is in other parts of the country. I mean all of the immigrants, they come in New York or they come in San Francisco, you know, but basically in the, you might say, rural South, it is just "my dad was in, my grandfather was in and I'm going to go in; and my kids are going to go in." You just did that for your country and I just think your love for your country may be a little stronger here.

He went on to say that in the South an Army career also was a way to raise your standard of living, which was why he welcomed the recruiters in the school. "Because I know it is a way out."

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(ix) JACOB BOND (black)

Back in 1986 I first met Jacob Bond at Haywood High School, where he was a Home Economics teacher. About ten years later I visited him in his classroom where a number of students were working on their assignments, while we talked about the South and the Vietnam War.

Jacob Bond is a native of Haywood County. "Born and raised in Brownsville. This is my home," he said. In 1962 he was in the Marine Corps and had orders to go to Vietnam. It was then that he had a car accident and broke both elbows. He was in hospital for a while and did not get the chance to go to Vietnam. The accident was the beginning of a long period of recuperation. Jacob Bond said he had to have surgery on one elbow. He was released from the Marine Corps in 1966. He then joined the Army Reserves and stayed in it for twenty-six years. He felt very lucky that he stayed out of Vietnam, for his Marine Corps company went to Vietnam and quite a few were killed there.

I asked Bond how his family felt about his having to go to Vietnam, before he had his accident. And he replied, "My family did not know a lot about Vietnam when it first started out. And my family was scared for me. When they found out I did not have to go, they were quite relieved." To this day he feels that the accident saved his life. How real was the Vietnam War in Brownsville?

BOND: We had TV, most of us had TV and radio, and, you know,

I had a friend down the street from me, their son got killed in Vietnam. And when he got killed, I think that's when a lot of people in my family -, they started realizing just how bad the war was over there.

VOOGT: And before that?

BOND: Before that, it was just something that we were going to and there was a war, but they did not really know just how serious. I don't really know how many young men that we lost from Brownsville in Vietnam. I know this one.

For Bond the war became a reality only when someone close was killed. Until then it was a distant war, something that happened on TV or that was discussed and reported on the radio. He went on to say that his first cousin William Cobb was in Vietnam. But, he said, "He does not like to talk about it, because he went through some tremendously bad incidences there."

On the veterans returning home:

In what way were the soldiers who returned from Vietnam welcomed home? Was anything special done?

BOND: No. When he got out of Vietnam, I don't know of nothing that was done . . . I never did hear him say, I have never heard of [anything] that was done for any soldiers that came home from Vietnam. Not while I was here. I have not heard, now there might have been some, but like I say, I have not heard of any. Vietnam was something that I heard about in the Marine Corps and I did not know the extent of how bad it was. Then when I got hurt and I did not go, I did not realize there was nothing as bad as it was until I did not go and I was, you know, just in the hospital from my injuries and that's when I started reading and started finding out it was extremely bad. Then when I lost a lot of guys that were in service with me, then I started realizing how bad and I did not have a lot of friends that were in Vietnam, because once I got out of service, when I got out of the Marine Corps, the only ones I knew were my cousin and a couple of more guys that were in Vietnam, some of those I did not really know then. I never was really a big part of Vietnam, just what I read, because, you know, the guys who were here when I left and went to Indianapolis [to college], you know, I lost contact.

On the impact of the Vietnam War on Brownsville:

It was Jacob Bond's view that Vietnam did not really affect life in Brownsville and Haywood County, because not many local people went to Vietnam.

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(x) JEFF HOOPER (white)

Born in Brownsville on February 11, 1945, Jeff Hooper has lived in Brownsville all his life, with the exception of the years he was at high school in Florida at the Academy, at the University of Kentucky, and some years in Memphis. He graduated in 1969 and returned to Brownsville where he got in the oil and feedstore business. He owns Brownsville Express, one of the city's convenience stores. Many people go there for gas and coffee; I was told by total strangers in the library that Brownsville Express served the best coffee in town. We met by chance while I was in the store; we sat down at one of the tables over a coffee, and talked about the 1960s, with the noise of the traffic accelerating in the street and the chatter of the customers and the cashier in the background.

VOOGT: Can you tell me what your memories are of the Vietnam War period?

Jeff HOOPER: Well, all the way through my college years the Vietnam Conflict as we called it at that time was utmost in all of our minds. It was a time that none of us could really figure out why we were there in Vietnam, what we were doing there, how we got there. We felt like it was, and found out later that it turned out to be mostly political. And that had a lot to do with my circle of friends as to how they felt about Vietnam. They did not feel like it was a war, they did not feel like we were serving any true purpose. And so there was a lot of confusion there as to where our true sentiments really were at that time.

You know, usually, you study the wars and you look back in the history of our country, and we always had a purpose and that purpose was carried out in the lives of each of the soldiers, but in this particular case, it was just a - it was so much of it was ambiguous, it was just - our hearts were not in it, I guess you would say. And so I think that led to a lot of confusion with my age group during the middle sixties and late sixties.

Was the younger generation, the young men eligible for the draft, more confused than the older generations living in Brownsville? He was away from Brownsville most of the time then. "I just knew what we thought in college." He certainly did not want to go to Vietnam, which is why he stayed in college to keep out of the draft. This was the most commonly used manner to keep out of the danger zone. Jeff said, "Even our own president has done the same thing and I can understand why he did it." And he repeated the opinion he had expressed before, saying that it was a very political war.

Jeff Hooper was a political science major at the university of Kentucky, and so, staying on campus away from the familiar world of his native Brownsville, and studying and reading about politics and Vietnam, it was a very intense period in his life. As he put it, "we dealt with it in all of our classes and discussed it to the nth degree and I think as I look back, and all that rhetoric that we seem to come up with, to put it in one word I would say, confusion. I would say we were confused." In fact this state of mind was not exclusive to the students at the University of Kentucky. Jeff remembered that "professors with a degree and men of my day, I would say we were just real confused about the whole idea of being in that part of the world".

On anti-war demonstrations:

Although he was opposed to the War in Vietnam, Jeff Hooper did not identify with what he referred to as the hippies involved in the demonstrations against American involvement in Vietnam. I asked him about his memories of demonstrations on the campus of the University of Kentucky.

> Jeff HOOPER: We had the SDS (Students for Democratic Society) Convention. We called it the hippie movement. They were the long-haired hippie movement, and it came to the University of Kentucky my senior year, I'm going to guess '68; 1968 is when they had their national convention at the University of Kentucky. Yes, I do remember that. It was a fiasco. I remember that. And I was - I sort of kept my - at an arm's length to that group. I mean, I did not identify at that point in my life.
> VOOGT: You said it was a fiasco?
> Jeff HOOPER: Well, it was just - just a lot of very hang-loose, hippie-type students from all over the country, much like Woodstock up in Connecticut during that time. That type of hippie movement was going on at that time and it was that same type of individual which at that time in my life I was trying to remove myself from that persuasion. I could not identify with that group. They were the pot-smoking, love, you know, very cheap morals,

what they were talking about, you know. Some of them would even get it mixed up with Jesus' love. Well, it was a very cheap type of shallow love.

Asked whether he himself demonstrated against the war, he answered that he had not made a demonstration of any kind. I then asked him if he remembered if students burned draft cards on the campus of the University of Kentucky.

Jeff HOOPER: Don't remember that.
VOOGT: Or did you just have discussions?
Jeff HOOPER: We may have burned draft cards. That's sort of coming back to me and it seems like that was one thing that we did do. We did not burn a flag, although that has since been somewhat popular on some campuses. No, I do not remember that happening. But I think a draft card, in fact, when you said that that brought back that memory. That did go on at Kentucky.
VOOGT: Was there flag burning going on at all in the South?
Jeff HOOPER: Don't remember that. Don't remember that. I'm not saying it did, but I don't remember that. It could have.[141]

Returning to an earlier point in the discussion, he said that the Vietnam War was a war that they did not understand, but that it did not dominate everything that they talked about in the classroom.

On the South:

We passed on to a discussion of the Republican and Democratic parties in the South. During his infrequent visits to his parents' home in Brownsville in the 1960s, he remembered that his mother and father were going through a political change in their lives. They had all been raised Democratic, because that was just the atmosphere of Tennessee at that time. The more he studied in college the more he realized that the parties were changing. The philosophies of the parties were changing, which was why his parents turned Republican. Did Jeff remember the reasons? The most important reason was that "the whole nature of the party was changing, more labor, minority persuasion, started moving more toward the Democratic Party and the Republican Party seemed to be more interested in the individual more so than the Democratic Party who had always been classified as the Party of the People. But that was changing and you could see that change and feel that change." I asked him if this had possibly anything to do with president Johnson's Great Society?

Jeff HOOPER: I think so. I think that during that time the Democrats were becoming more big government philosophy. They felt like the government could - had the answer to all of our needs and, yeah, I could see that increasing more and more. I remember discussing that with some of my contemporaries, students, and also professors.

VOOGT: Did the fact that you were breaking with a Southern tradition make it harder?

Jeff HOOPER: It did. Republicans had always been big Eastern money. That was the conception of what the two parties were, but I think that was beginning to change. I know it was. During those years of the Vietnam Conflict people were beginning to second-guess that - the Bay of Pigs under John Kennedy. All of that was beginning to change the ideology of the Democratic Party. The South was slow in picking it up. They were very much slower in accepting that change and recognizing it. Now that's my opinion. I think history is going to prove that out.

We wandered over several other subjects. Jeff was very concerned about developments in modern America, particularly the lack of a strong, well-rounded home, and the increasing number of welfare recipients. He saw parallels between conditions in present-day America and the final days of Rome.

Jeff Hooper typically exemplifies the attitude of the patriotic Southern student. Although his studies and frequent discussions convinced him that an American presence in Vietnam did not serve any useful purpose, which in effect made him stay on in college to avoid the draft, he did not participate in anti-war demonstrations. He did not identify with and even disliked the SDS, the student organization that was behind anti-war demonstrations on a large number of campuses nationwide, which he referred to as the hippy movement.

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(xi) LYNN SHAW (white)

Lynn Jackson Shaw was born 15 December 1940 in Brownsville, Tennessee. His father was C. Battle Shaw, Sr. (1898-1968). His mother is Mae Jackson Shaw (1909). He attended Anderson Grammar School and graduated from Haywood High School. He attended Lambuth College, majoring in history. In 1961 he became a member of the Haywood County Fire Department, serving 15 years as a volunteer fireman.

On 24 December 1961, he married Mary Ann Bond in Tucson, Arizona. Mary Ann is the daughter of Elias King Bond and Mary Evelyn Farrar. In 1966, Lynn went into the truck and auto service wrecker business. After the death of his father in 1968, he inherited a portion of "Dark Corner" plantation near Arlington, Tennessee. This was the plantation of his great-great-grandfather William Battle III, who was given a land grant for his service in the War of 1812. In 1976, Lynn became interested in the Sons of the Confederate Veterans organization. In June, 1976, he chartered a camp in Brownsville, Tennessee. He was elected the camp's first commander, a position he held at three different times. In 1980, he was elected state commander. In 1982, he was elected national lieutenant commander-in-chief of the organization serving until 1986. Locally, he was elected vice-president of the Haywood Co. Historical Society when it was chartered. He was placed on the three-member Historical Commission of Haywood County.

Lynn and Mary Ann have taken an active part at Tabernacle Kinfolks Meeting since building a cabin there in 1977. In 1984, he was able to charter the first Tennessee state society of the War of 1812. The national society was basically an eastern society existing in the original 13 states. Lynn was elected the first state society president and now holds the national office of district president general. In 1987, he co-edited and authored the *Commanders-in-Chief of the Sons of Confederate Veterans* (privately printed, 1987).

On the steps of the former Haywood High School, on a day of blue skies and high winds, Lynn Shaw talked to me on the Civil War, the South, and the Vietnam War. He accounted for the large number of books on the Vietnam War available then by saying that it was the most recent war that the United States had been involved in. He went on in one breath, "Of course, I think the major war, the war that had so many more casualties than all the other wars, was the War Between the States. It had more than World War I and World War II put together as far as America is concerned. So there is a lot of interest in that war still." Did he think that the attitude to the Vietnam War, though, was different here in the South?

> SHAW: I think Southerners as a whole are a volunteer kind of - well, Tennessee is the Volunteer State, that's the nickname. I mean, you know, I think that Tennesseans have traditionally participated in their nation's wars and I think that's one of the main reasons that you see a lot of volunteers from here in this part of the region of the country and so I would think that the acceptance of a war would be greater here probably than in other areas.

How many men from Brownsville and Haywood County approximately

had been involved in the Vietnam War? He did not know, but he said, "I was personally touched by it, because a lifelong friend and a teacher at this high school was killed in Vietnam: Norman Lane, lieutenant Norman Lane."[142] I asked him if his friend's death caused him to change his opinion about the war. He answered that he had always believed that the war was the right thing for America to be involved in at that time.

On the Vietnam veterans:

How were the Vietnam veterans welcomed? He said, "I would say like returning veterans have traditionally enjoyed, probably not as much as World War II, but, certainly there was no badmouthing them. Lynn's wife Mary Ann then said, "Some were killed in Vietnam and then Norman Lane, but then as far as the blacks, see, we hadn't integrated at that time, so I don't know how many blacks were killed." And turning to her husband, she asked, "But don't you think Judy Bishop would have the records of the ones killed from Haywood County?"

She raised an interesting point here. The black and the white communities were like two separate entities, in another interview Leon King, black policeman and lay preacher said exactly the same thing when he talked about black casualties. He was not aware of the white local servicemen killed in the Vietnam War.

We talked about Neil Sheehan, who as a young reporter went on missions with the troops, and his claim that the young soldiers who did the actual fighting knew what was really going on, whereas the commanding generals, away in Saigon, Honolulu, and Washington did not. Lynn commented, "Well, I think the obvious thing is that America could have won that war had the military been allowed to pursue the war in a strictly military, not a political style. So I think that many people in the military and the people at home felt frustrated because the war was not carried on to a winning conclusion." He argued that conventional arms could have won the war if it had been "prosecuted, you know, like wars ordinarily are, to win, but I just don't think it was". Lynn echoed Von Clausewitz, the Prussian authority on the art of warfare, who, in *On War* pointed out that before embarking on a war people should define their objectives first, after which an all-out effort should be pursued to attain those objectives.[143]

What was missing in the American war effort in Southeast Asia was a clearly specified military objective as well as a total commitment of all available means towards achieving it. In *On Strategy: A Critical Analysis of the Vietnam War*, colonel Harry G. Summers, Jr., argues that America did not intend to achieve victory and that U.S. doctrine specifically excluded it as an aim in war. He quotes General Maxwell Taylor testifying before the Senate in 1966 as saying that America was not trying to defeat North Vietnam, but only "'to cause them to mend their ways'". Colonel Summers further argues that the United States, in its pursuit of its policy

of containment, entered the Vietnam War on the strategic defensive and that an American failure to appreciate what this strategic posture entailed contributed to America losing the war.[144] George C. Herring does not believe that the War in Vietnam could have been won at a cost considered acceptable by most Americans.[145] In *A Time for War*, Robert D. Schulzinger maintains that there was nothing the United States could have done to win the Vietnam War.[146] Finally, H.R. McMaster, in *Dereliction of Duty*, writes about the Vietnam War as the war that the United States could not win at a politically acceptable level of commitment.[147]

Lynn Shaw's résumé clearly identifies him as a Southerner with a sense of history. The mere mention of the Vietnam War, in his case, immediately brings to mind what he calls "the War Between the States". He remembered the Vietnam War chiefly as the war in which his best friend was killed. In spite of this he sincerely believed that American policy in Southeast Asia was right. Interestingly, his wife Mary Ann referred to the Vietnam War era as a time when the local community was still segregated and that for that reason she did not know exactly how many blacks had been killed in the War.

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(xii) DR. GEORGE MOSS, JR. (white)

Dr. George Moss is a veterinary surgeon and has his clinic in Bells, northeast of Brownsville. George and his family love nature, they also love to hunt. On their farm in the south of Haywood County they devote much time to preserving wildlife.

Sitting in his pick-up truck on highway 76 and heading for his farm in the direction of Summerville, he talked about Vietnam and the South.

> MOSS: You may have to ask me many questions, you know. Most of us that are old enough to have been in a war and did not serve in a war don't have the same experiences of love of homeland and country like our older veterans did. The World War II veterans are the ones who actually served the country for a purpose, and it was an understood purpose. And the country made a sacrifice, and then from that time on, which was the Second World War, there has never been really a purpose. And even these skirmishes that we are having now with Iran-Iraq; all of these have no purpose as far as we Americans are concerned. We can't understand them anymore than we can understand Bosnia.

> Vietnam served no purpose for us. We as Americans never felt that we were in danger as a country. So, it was never a situation where we had to go fight.

When I remarked that the war was intended to contain communism, he replied, "That's true."

> MOSS: And obviously, we thought of ourselves as someone who could stop it at some point; and this was a good place to stop it. It was a whole lot easier to fight Vietnam than it would be to fight the Soviet Union. And if we could show the world that we meant business and that we were going to stop communism wherever we needed to. . .; we attempted to show that with Korea. And we did a very poor job with Korea. We fought a war that we actually did not win. You know, we may have won the war as far as we collected the most bodies at the end, but, other than that, there was no real start and no real stop.
> VOOGT: Was it a mistake to get involved in Vietnam right at the start, helping the French financially?
> MOSS: There is no doubt that it was a mistake when we are looking back, because looking back we can see everything that we did wrong and all the wrong chess moves that we made. So, of course, now we have come a lot more informative as to what we should have done. But at the time we did make a mistake. We did get in the war that we should not have gotten in. But, there was no way that we as a country could let this happen.
> VOOGT: You are saying this with hindsight, but, what is interesting to look at is how you felt at the time. Was that a point at the time, while it was going on, that you felt, "Well, this is the point where we should draw the line and say no?"
> MOSS: I don't think that we ever thought that this was going to be any kind of major skirmish. I thought that we were going to run over there and do a little police work and tie their hands together and spank them on the back of their hands and it would be over and we would come home. And, we obviously found an enemy that was - had just as much cause as we had, or perceived cause. Then obviously we did not carry through with what we went over there to do and it really did split our country and it has continued to split our country.
> VOOGT: When did you feel that it started splitting the country?
> MOSS: I actually did not. I was - being from the South and, of course, a great number of our soldiers - very high percentage of soldiers were from the rural South and some states like North Carolina had a very high percentage of young men in the military. I

> don't think that we ever felt during the conflict that we were doing something that we should not have been doing or that we were in a situation that we should not have been, other than the fact that we were not trying hard enough to win. You can't fight a war on your own soil, and we were essentially fighting on our own soil in South Vietnam, and essentially letting the Vietnamese - the North Vietnamese - just line up at the border of their country and do whatever they wanted to do. So I don't think that we as Southerners as a general rule felt that we were in a war that we should not be in. Right to the end, we felt like we should have been there.
>
> VOOGT: But would that be different for the rest of the country? You say, "We as Southerners." Aren't you thinking just of students and intellectuals in certain spots, like Kent State and so on, or do you feel that there was a real difference at the time between the South and the rest of the country?
>
> MOSS: There is no doubt that there was a real difference. Not that we in the South are any slower; it is just that we may think a little bit different toward country. We may even think a little different toward war, and, of course, *we in the South did lose a war one time which was a very important war to us and we in the South still relive the Civil War which the rest of the country doesn't relive it* [my emphasis]. We had a strong feeling about war and about winning wars. And we were out there to win this thing because we were not going to lose.

In the course of 1995-1996, whenever the Civil War and its aftermath came up in the discussions, the emotions ultimately connected with a sense of loss were always there, as here in the interview with Dr. George Moss. Further examples may be found in the discussion with Lynn Shaw, who talked about the many casualties of the War Between the States, as he called it, and also in the interview with Dr. Tommy Russell III, who said that he had never got used to the South losing the war. The emotion is not exclusive to Brownsville and Haywood County, but is something shared by many people all over the South, as appears from the title of C. Vann Woodward's book *The Burden of Southern History*.

The Lost Cause, the popularized title of Edward A. Pollard's history of the Confederacy (1866) formed the basis of different "interpretations of the meaning and significance of the celebration of the war", the most important explaining it in either political or mythical terms. [148] James M. McPherson, however, in *Drawn with the Sword: Reflections on the American Civil War*, points out that much historical writing on the Civil War today pays "scant attention" to what Walt Whitman called "the real war": the experiences of the three million soldiers and the vicarious extensions of those experiences to their families and friends back home,

who constituted almost the whole of the American people. Fought entirely on American soil, the Civil War killed almost as many American soldiers as all the rest of the wars fought by the U.S. combined.[149] The sense of loss pervading, and emanating from most Civil War literature is characteristic.

I asked George Moss, "Is that the basic point, you think, that the rest of the country did not lose a war, or that the idea or possibility of losing a war did not occur to the rest of the country, but was much more important here?"

> MOSS: Possibly. I really can't speak for the rest of the country, because obviously I don't know how they felt, but I think that anytime you are in any kind of war that you do lose, obviously you are going to feel differently the next time you go to fight. You are going to bring a bigger stick or hit a little bit harder or hit a little bit quicker and it is something that we in the South - we felt like we were being deceived by the military only in that they were not being allowed to win. It is not that they were over there. It is that they were not being allowed to their best shot.
> VOOGT: Who exactly would not let the United States win this war?
> MOSS: (laughing)

Who was or were responsible for denying American soldiers in Vietnam a military victory? George felt that it became "a grassroots thing", and that the press did as much as anything to end the war. Had his opinion changed at all during the war?

> MOSS: I don't think that I ever really changed until I realized right at the end that we were not going to win the war. And then it became a frustration, where I could not understand why we were the ones being shown dead and we were not showing the other side as taking the losses. You could hear the [body] count - you know, say so many on one side and so many on the other side. But they were not graphically shown. Of course, it is a whole lot easier to look at an enemy as not human even, somebody that you want to and need to eliminate. While in your case you've got to have zero losses. I don't think that we really felt like we were fighting another country, a people we could understand, because we could not talk to them, and they are so different, they live different, and, you know, it was almost like it was a need that we had to just win this war.
> VOOGT: You said several times, "we were not allowed to win the

war". Who exactly do you think was stopping you from winning this war? What politicians are you thinking of?

MOSS: I'm not sure that I could even name names. I think it became one of those situations where possibly we were concerned that the war would escalate. And possibly if we did invade North Vietnam, we could end up with a situation with the Soviet Union.

Yet he remained convinced that America could have won the war. They could have completely destroyed the internal fabric of the country; they could have bombed all rice field dikes, bombed their ports, and the country would have ground to a halt.

On the South:

I quoted Dr. Charles Mayo of Lambuth University, Jackson, Tennessee, who had said to me, "Probably the further South you go, the more patriotic people become."

MOSS: I think that is true and I think that part of it is due to what we were just talking about; love of country and the fact that we are more rural. We have an identity with our land, we have an identity with each other. We tend to grow up and live in the same neighborhoods that we have always lived in, and, of course, any rural area in the nation is going to be the same, but we are not moving into the suburbs quite as fast, you know. We are just staying right where we are. The small towns that we are in, are the small towns that we were born in.

Obviously, in the rural areas where we know each other, where Johnny lives next-door to us and he's not only our next-door neighbor, he's also my wife's first cousin or my wife's second cousin. And Jimmy who lives down the street is the same way, you know, and even if they are not close kin, they are still somehow related to us and then, in a loss in a war, we are not only losing a soldier, we are losing somebody out of our community. We are losing somebody that is a piece of us.

On the draft:

Most people in the South were not draft dodgers. In the words of George Moss, "We did not think that we should not be a part of it, because this was just part of being an American." In any discussion about draft dodgers, president Carter's name comes up.

> MOSS: He was an excellent man. He was not a good leader and he was not loved by most of us in the rural South, other than the fact that he was a good man. He loved everybody, and because he loved his fellowman, one of the first things he did was pardon the draft dodgers. And, of course, he was pardoning people that we did not want him to pardon.

During the Vietnam War, George Moss had been in college and had just been fortunate to have a high enough number. Yet he had never thought about not going to Vietnam if he had been drafted. He said, "We had a lot of students, who were not from the South, and I never heard one protest against the Vietnam War."

On the Democrat South:

In the South they used to be all Democrats. However, much has changed during the last two or three elections. The Democrats liked their local Democrat system. "We like the Democrats, because we like the good ole boy system." Characteristic of the old Democrat system was that if they had an elected official it was somebody they knew.

On the effects of the Vietnam War:

Moss believed that as a result of Vietnam, the United States had become a fractured nation. He concluded, "We have come to need something to bring us back together and in the past we have had wars that have brought us together." As the pick-up truck was getting nearer the Moss farm in the southernmost part of the county on the bright afternoon of November 11, 1995, I stopped the tape, and looked at the withered corn stalks on the land that had been left for the birds, for the preservation of wildlife. Clearly, there is a close relationship between this type of twentieth-century country life and that of much of England in the nineteenth century. The combination of a passion for hunting and the urge to preserve wildlife simultaneously echoes *The Shooting Party*, Isabel Colegate's novel about the eve of the end of the rural aristocracy in England, written just before the real shooting party of the twentieth century, World War I, began.[150]

What transpires from the interview is the Southernness of Dr. George Moss. It shows in his leisure pursuits, but it also is apparent in the way he looks at the War in Vietnam. In his view America had not tried hard enough to win the war. To him winning the war, any war in fact in which America was involved, was important, because, as he put it, "the South did lose a war one time...". Another difference between the South and the

rest of America, he believed, was the South's lingering memory of the Civil War. Moss also subscribed to the belief, which he viewed as Southern, that America was not allowed to win the War in Vietnam. He was convinced that the United States could have won the war.

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(xiii) LAYMON JOHNSON (black)

Born and raised in Haywood County, Laymon Johnson, in his early seventies when we talked, graduated from Haywood County Training School. He went into the Army in 1942.[151] In the course of World War II he served in New Guinea and the Philippines as a supply sergeant with the aviation engineers. He left the Army in 1946 to go to Howard University for two years. He joined the Reserves and escorted the Army's soldiers who had died in foreign fields back home. He rejoined the Army and finished his career in 1965. During his long service he traveled far and wide. He was stationed in Korea as well as in Germany, visiting many countries when off duty.

After his retirement he was actively involved in the community in various capacities, including the direction of the Big Hatchie Development Corporation. After a merger in 1972 he became assistant director of the newly formed Chickasaw Area Development Commission. In 1973 he became a highway safety planner with the Southwest Tennessee Development District in Jackson. In 1980 he became director of the Chickasaw Commission, retiring in 1984. Because there was no black Boy Scout troop, he formed Troop 140 in 1966. He was also active in his church, Farmer's Chapel C.M.E. He delivered Meals on Wheels, which does not quite complete the list of his activities for the community.

Johnson's retirement from the Army more or less coincided with the escalating Vietnam Conflict. He was stationed at Fort Bragg, N.C. at that time, leaving the Army on May 1, 1965. Asked how he felt about America's involvement in Vietnam, he replied, "I felt we should have been there, if we could stop communism, because communism, if we did not stop it, it was going to eventually come to the United States, but sometimes I think it was a lost cause because the French had been fighting them for years."

VOOGT: You mentioned communism - was that the common belief at the time - did people all believe in the domino theory - that if Vietnam fell, other countries would fall? Was that what people believed?

JOHNSON: Right.

I asked him if his opinion about U.S. involvement in the war changed at all as the war dragged on. He replied that he did not really think about it much. Yet one of the things that he did think about was that most Americans who went over there were not used to guerrilla war. The unit he was in, was training special forces to fight this type of war.

On anti-war demonstrations:

JOHNSON: Most of the demonstrations were in larger cities. I cannot recall any type of demonstration against the Vietnam War in this area. I'm not sure whether there were any in Memphis or not. A lot of people here may not like war, but if they have to go, then they go ahead without any problems.

He went on to say that many blacks went into the service, because jobs in the area were scarce. It was a means of getting money and it also was a chance to see the world.

On Vietnam veterans:

Johnson said that he was a member of American Legion Post 114, and that they had been trying to get some of the younger people to join the Legion. He said that a few did join, and paid their dues, but that they would not come to the meetings. It would appear, therefore, that neither the white nor the black Vietnam veterans were interested in joining the veterans of World War II.

Summing up we find, first, that Johnson accepted the domino theory. Consequently, it made sense to argue, as he did, that America should fight communism in Vietnam. Secondly, we find that Johnson also reflected the patriotism that we have also seen in other members of the local community.

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(xiv) MARTHA HOOPER (white)

The former Miss Martha Graham Myatt, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Lewis Jackson Myatt of 4176 Tuckahoe Road, Memphis, married attorney Carmon Thomas Hooper III, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Carmon

Thomas Hooper II of 236 North Grand Avenue, Brownsville, on August 25, 1962, at St. Luke's Methodist Church in Memphis, Tennessee.

At the time of the interview Martha Hooper had lived in Brownsville for thirty-three years, where she had raised five children. I asked her if she could remember how Vietnam affected people in Brownsville.

> Martha HOOPER: No, I don't remember. Now, when I was in college in the early sixties, of course, they still had the draft and boys were still sent. But I think they must have had deferment if you were in college, because I really did not know anybody who was in the service at that time or then, after I moved to Brownsville. I, of course, - it took me a while to get to know the community and I did not know any of the young men very well at that time. But pretty much what I saw on television or read in the newspaper. At that time in 1968 I had three little children, so I was pretty well occupied taking care of them during that time. I remember there was a young man here who was killed in Vietnam and that was the only - well, I remember another one, - there were two. But one that was, - his parents were natives of Brownsville. He was my age exactly. I remember he was killed; he was related to the Thorntons here in Brownsville. And, of course, that is a large family and his mother was a Thornton and they lived away from here, but his name was Norman Lane. I don't know, maybe you have heard that name. He was, I would say, one of the more prominent of the young men from this area that I remembered that was killed. And then there was another young man whose sister still lives here. She was Jack Pettigrew's wife, Susan. Her, Susan's, brother was killed in Vietnam and I know it was about - around 1970 or 1971 that he died. He was about my brother's age who had just finished medical school and was never in the service. But my brother died right after, so I felt sort of kinship with her because of that. But, anyway, this other memory that I have is of a Presley boy who was not killed, but I remember when he came home from being in Vietnam. They had a big banner across one of the yards or on the square, something about welcoming him home from the war and that is really, I guess, about as close as I got to any of it. And then there was the Lovelace boy as well who was there. I do remember that.

On anti-war protests:

She remembered that the war was a problem for president Johnson. She felt strongly about it; she had always been a very patriotic person. She was a member of the DAR (Daughters of the American Revolution), which is a patriotic organization. "We stress patriotism; it just killed me to

see these people protesting against our country because of what it was doing." At the time she did not go into the reasoning behind the war, but by 1996 she had thought more thoroughly about it and she was more informed about it than she was then, when she was busy taking care of her family. "But, anyway," she said, "it hurt me to see the long-haired students that were, you know, smoking marijuana and all that and protesting the Vietnam War, when there were young men over there who were defending these - not defending our country so much, but representing our country and to see the two extremes, you know, - I felt for the men who were over there. I never did - I just did not appreciate the protesters at all, even though they certainly had the right to do that." She remembered seeing it all in the newspaper and on television. "There was nothing here, there may have been some, but I was not aware of them. I don't remember." Nor did she remember protests at Southwestern University.

On deferments:

Martha Hooper remembered students in her surroundings would try to get an educational deferment rather than burn their draft cards. "They would work it so that they were in school or continuing with their education, which you cannot argue with. I think if I knew anybody that was deferred, it would have been for that reason, for education."

On the South:

> Martha HOOPER: Now, of course, the South is changing. But at that period I would say it was a great deal of patriotism. That is why I feel like these students at Vanderbilt and Southwestern - their families had a sense of patriotism too and they were brought up that way. I think even to this day the South tends to be the most patriotic part of the country.
> VOOGT: Why is that, do you think?
> Martha HOOPER: Well, I think, it may go back to our - maybe, the South. Of course they tease and make fun of the Bible Belt, but generally people who are of a religious nature and have that type of values, the patriotism fits right in with that. Usually you don't find a real patriotic person who is not as well a religious person.[152]
> The South has always had to defend itself, so that, you know, we get called a lot of names and people think - just from the Civil War - they think, I don't know. The South has been put down a lot and, I think, now it is coming into its own and people are realizing that it is a good part of the country. Let me say, of course, this has nothing to do with Vietnam.
> When I was saying that religious people are usually patriotic people

- there are people, of course, religious people in some areas who are associated greatly with race - like Ku Klux Klan - those - but generally, and this is going to sound not like a very good statement, but there are people who are generally not very well educated, who are that. But I would say among the educated Southerners there is - I mean, not everybody - but usually where you find those little pockets of people.

I have been a member [of the CAR] since I was about ten years old. It was the Children of the American Revolution and it was my mother who got me in at that time. What you do? You have to be able to trace your ancestry back to the Revolutionary War. And you have an ancestor, that you can directly go through the years of history to your family. And we stress patriotism. Now, of course, it had to do originally with the Revolutionary War, but anyone - it is open to anyone who can trace their ancestry and you have to have all these complicated papers where you show - we have a very large complex of buildings in Washington, D.C., a library there that we - with all the genealogy. In this part of the country people are very interested in genealogy. I think too that people in the South to some extent had stayed in the South and not moved, you know, where there are big corporations and big companies in manufacturing, people just move all the time. There are people in this area, who have lived here most of their lives. That gives them a strong sense of community and family, because my children have grown up around both of their grandmothers and Tommy has twenty something first cousins, who have lived here for years. It is just a strong sense of family and community. Good for children and their self-esteem and their sense of belonging.

VOOGT: Why is it that people are so attached to the land? A lot of people here, even though they have other jobs, have land.

Martha HOOPER: This, of course, being an agricultural area, land has played an important part in our economy and even though, as you say, someone may have another job -, but I know my family were not farmers. Now, my grandmother on my mother's side was from Mississippi, northern Mississippi, and they had a good bit of farmland and I know I have heard that during the Great Depression here in this country, my grandmother and grandfather had three children in college during that time, in Mississippi colleges. And my mother has always said that it was my grandmother's cotton that got those children through college.

Martha had only faint memories of the War in Vietnam. Yet she vividly remembered the "long-haired students", protesting against the war and how much she had disliked them for it. The campus of Southwestern University, where she had been a student, had been quiet in contrast. An

active member of the Daughters of the American Revolution, Martha is a true Southerner, who is convinced that the South still is the most patriotic part of the country.

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(xv) C. THOMAS HOOPER III (white)

Attorney C. Thomas Hooper III is the grandson of the late Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Jefferson Mann, and of William Francis Hooper and the late Mrs. Hooper, all of Brownsville. He was graduated from Kentucky Military Institute, the University of Alabama, and the Vanderbilt School of Law. He was a member of Delta Kappa Epsilon fraternity at Alabama, and of Phi Delta Phi legal fraternity at Vanderbilt. He was a representative to the 82nd General Assembly, state of Tennessee from Haywood County. He served as a jet pilot in the U.S. Air Force. He married Miss Martha Graham Myatt on August 25, 1962.

I talked to Tommy Hooper in his stylishly decorated office on the courthouse square, books lining the wall behind his desk. On the opposite wall a framed, enlarged photograph of his family.

He said, "We have been here in Brownsville, my mother's side since the 1700s. My first inkling is 1796 or something like that. My four great-grandparents - I don't know about the Hooper side - they came from Virginia. I have traced it back a pretty good ways and back to England." About his dad's side he told me that they were buried in the cornfields out and around Brownsville. These words reminded me of the first impressions of Haywood County, experienced in 1986. It was the incredible sight of burial sites here and there along the country lanes connecting the communities of the county. Sometimes there were just six ancient tombstones, sometimes more. Then there was the graveyard behind the houses occupied by a number of black families on Anderson Avenue, across from Jeff Hooper's Citgo gas station. Life and death were closer together here in the South than they were in Holland, where graveyards are hidden behind walls of green foliage.

We moved away from his family history and talked about the 1960s, which he called a mean-spirited time. He blamed especially president Johnson for getting America involved in "that Vietnam War".

> Tommy HOOPER: Of course, Kennedy was the first one that got us into it. And those two Democrat presidents got us so involved that we could not get ourselves out. The people were against it very much, especially the young people. So it was a war that was not

> generally one that the people wanted. They just did not feel like there was anything in there for us. But we are communist haters, a lot of us are. And so we go off wrong-headed at times because of somebody is a communist. We have been that way in the public eye, you know, when the communists were a lot more thick in Hollywood or the McCarthy era, when they went after the communists in a hard way. So, it was kind of a harsh time and, I guess, it was a wrong way to whip communism. I think Reagan had a better idea about it to build ourselves up and they tried to be equal with us and it has broken them and it has almost broken us financially.

He went on to say that although he believed in the domino theory, Kennedy was probably wrong in sending advisers to Vietnam. He felt that the United States were supporting the wrong kind of people in South Vietnam. Then South Vietnamese leaders did not have the hearts of the people and the communists did. They often thought about Vietnam at the time, because "young men were being killed and we had people from our county that lost their lives". And also, they saw the bodies coming back, which was upsetting and as far as they could see America was not getting anywhere. He added, "And we could not do it with might and power and our bombs and our big airplanes. We were fighting an enemy with feathers so to speak."

> Tommy HOOPER: Of course, television brought it to our bedrooms, to our homes, and every day. And then, we just saw the slaughter going on and I did not see any end to it. And I saw us spending umpteen dollars that we did not have to spend. We were already in debt and it looked like we were spending more and more and not getting anywhere. So Johnson, president Johnson, got us into it so thick there was no way to extricate ourselves. And I was thinking, "I don't know how we're going to end this thing. We are going to lose, it looks like and maybe we better save face and save anymore lives, because we were not going to beat these people."

He then talked about local servicemen who were killed in Vietnam. He did not remember how they had lost their lives, but he knew several men had been killed there during the war, which brought the war close to home. He said, "I had several friends that lost their sons." Did he remember any names? "Marian and Elizabeth Thornton lost a grandson and I can't remember his name, but he visited here quite a bit and he was quite a nice young man. I remember the Land boy. That is Sonny Land's son, who died there and then, I remember the people that moved in. Yes, the

Johnston family lost a son. They moved in here with American Air Filter from somewhere up North. And they lost a son there. That is Dr. Pettigrew's brother-in-law. That is three that I can think of off-hand."

The repetition of the "I remember" phrase seemed to function as a ritual almost and stimulated Tommy Hooper's memory. After the first deaths the Vietnam War was "very real" to the people of Brownsville and Haywood County. The local population stayed in touch with the families and the people were generally very supportive of the war at the very beginning. He said, "I think they were frustrated as it went on. But children's lives that were lost -, the families were given the greatest of sympathy, as I remember it, from the community." His feelings about the Johnson administration were a different matter. They felt frustrated, because of the policies of the government in keeping on when they were not making any progress with all their heavy duty troops in Vietnam, and all the thousands of boys that were there. It was as if they were trying to win with one hand tied behind them, because America would not unleash its arsenal. Yet, with hindsight, he did not believe that the U.S. could have gained control of Vietnam "with those people fighting in the underground".

> Tommy HOOPER: If we had fought with all our might, we might have been able to do better than we did. And they would not let them do that as I remember; and that was one of the problems we fought with the war effort and our leaders. They were willing to fight, but only partially so. And so that was not the way to fight, as I could see it.

On the Vietnam veterans:

The local servicemen who returned from Vietnam were treated with dignity and praise. There was absolutely no hostility toward any veteran. He said that the South was conservative. "We just don't have that much anti-government."

On the South:

Tommy said that the South had changed dramatically in the last twenty or thirty years. How? I asked him.

> Well, they're still conservative. They've always been conservative, but they feel that the government is not conservative and so they have switched allegiances as far as I can see. It is not like it was. The black people from Republican turned Democrat and the white

people were Democrats, but became Republicans. We have just switched. The Southerners were blind Democrats because of the Civil War. The Republicans became the carpetbaggers and rushed out here. And Lincoln, being a Republican, turned the blacks to free men. And the whites hated very much the Republicans and hated, very much, Lincoln. And the women - the men were killed - and they were staying home helping the effort of the Confederacy, and the Union Army would come through and they would do everything they could to make life miserable for the Union Army and the women hated the Republicans, very much so.

In reading I found two Resolutions of prominent lawyers here in the late 1800s and the Resolutions, both of which I found recently, talked about them being staunch Democrats and they were both Confederate captains. And that was the general feeling and so that feeling prevailed whatever the Democrats did until the 1970s when Nixon came and started turning the South around. And now, it is just about all Republican. But the feeling from the Civil War went on for years, because all of my grandparents and all were staunch Democrats. And you could put all the Republicans in a phone booth in the South early on in the sixties. Especially there were not any Republicans here, and now most of the whites are Republicans, more so every year as the old ones die off. My grandparents and aunts and all were Democrats. My daddy changed, but just late in life. So that is how it works.

The effects of the Civil War and the period of Reconstruction were far-reaching. Most families in the South were affected by the war and its aftermath. The Union Army came down to Haywood County and, as Hooper phrased it, "dictated to us years after that". He went on to say that all the positions in the courthouses in the South were taken by black people, which the white people accepted with difficulty. It was the time when they had black senators and black congressmen and black office holders in the courthouse. Hence there was no love lost between white Southerners and the Republican party and the South was solid Democrat for many years. And for that reason, Hooper said, "it did not make any difference to Lyndon Johnson what he did or how he did in the Civil Rights Act [1964], and the South did not like it. But they went along with it."

On anti-war demonstrations:

The South is not prone to protests. What was the origin of the good manners, which characterize the South? It is true that Southerners like to think of themselves as having better manners. One explanation that

Tommy offered was that they tended to be raised in a family; and perhaps the manners brought over to the South by the landed gentry from England had also had an effect. At any rate, Tommy felt that the South was a different place to live, where people are more hospitable and courteous, more outgoing, and more interested in people, to the point sometimes of being irritating, than elsewhere in the U.S. He added, "But we like people and we are curious about people and I guess it is our curiosity too. We feel like we can ask anybody anything."

The significant elements of the history of Southern culture that emerge from the interview are, first, that Tommy Hooper traces one of his ancestors back to Virginia and back to England. Other ancestors lie buried in the fields surrounding Brownsville, which establishes him as a descendant of early settlers. Secondly, he describes in great detail the changing political scene in the South, tracing it from the aftermath of the Civil War to the Vietnam War era. He also emphasizes the legacy of the Civil War and the period of Reconstruction. His attitude to the Vietnam War appears ambivalent: on the one hand, he blames president Kennedy and president Johnson for getting America involved, yet, on the other hand, he shows himself a genuinely patriotic Southerner, blaming the American government for not allowing the men fighting in Vietnam to win the war: (America would not unleash its arsenal). Perhaps the ambivalence results from his strong dislike of the Democrats (And those Democrat presidents got us so involved).

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(xvi) LEON KING (black)

On the sunny afternoon of August 9, 1996, I drove down to Robin Road in the Northwestern part of Brownsville. A police patrol car sitting in front of Leon King's home functioned as a beacon. Sergeant and Rev. Leon King, being an alderman besides, was a busy man. Aged 42, he was a sergeant with the Public Service Commission, serving as an enforcement officer and supervising seven West Tennessee counties. At the same time he was the assistant pastor of Holy Deliverance. He grew up in a family of six boys and four girls. He knew hard work, picking cotton and okra and slopping hogs. At age twelve he went to work at Pierce's Grocery on North Washington Street.[153] Leon King had lived in Brownsville all his life. He had been married for twenty-eight years and had five children. They loved living in Brownsville and liked the people.

During the war his wife's brother served in Vietnam. It was a time when people were much disturbed. "Young men going off to war, not

knowing if they were going to return, it had a bad taste in the mouth about it. It was such a big shock to the whole city, to the whole community. Neighborhoods, and friends - we were quiet, shared time together and all that. All in all, it worked - we were blessed." Back in the 1960s "it was really just black and white; it was really separated." The big change came when the schools were integrated. Before integration things were really tough, because "really we [the blacks] did not have the knowledge and did not have the ability; and things were not open for us as it is now. There has been a big change from the sixties to now." To illustrate the change that had come over the community, he mentioned that he had joined the Haywood County Ministerial Alliance; an alliance where the white preachers and the black preachers all came together on a monthly basis.

> KING: One of the biggest thrills of my life was that I was given the chance to go into a white church. And this was a Methodist church; went into the church and many received us real well, real warm welcome and everything. Had a Thanksgiving service and during that week of Thanksgiving services, we went into the Thanksgiving service. I got a chance to speak in that church, one of the big thrills of my life. So there's been a lot of changes I have seen here in the community, which amazes me. Back in the sixties you did not see whites and blacks walking the street associate together. I mean, you stayed on your side of the street or you stayed behind this point. And now when you drive home you see white and black kids riding bicycles together. And I think, basically if a lot of the older people just kind of get out of the way and just let the young people live, I believe it would be a better world. I think a lot of old people with their prejudices and their dislikes and their hatred of races and all that stuff, I think most of it you hear from the older people, because the younger people don't see it now.

On the Vietnam War:

His wife's brother went to Vietnam in the sixties. He remembered it as a tough time. Everybody whose sons had to go to war in Vietnam was worried. Then he said, "Black people are such a close knit people!" He remembered them getting together as a family, crying and just wondering how it was going to be. "I tell you what really brought us through - we knew God, and prayed constantly for my sister's husband. And everybody would write." They would write every week, and would write letters for him and would have "communication going". They shared the names with the churches and through the neighborhood and would say: "Hey, write my son!" Asked if he remembered who from Brownsville was killed in the

Vietnam War, he said, "Yeah. I remember one guy, I think the first guy I remember was young, I think his name was Butler. He lost his life over there and it just kind of shook, you know, it just shook the whole community. It was really tough."

In the course of the Vietnam War, which was a very long war, black as well as white soldiers from Brownsville and Haywood County were killed. To illustrate the distance existing between the black and white groups in the community, Leon said that he would not be afraid to say that some of the whites lost their lives that the blacks did not know about. "The blacks were a kind of group to themselves, you know." Some of the blacks lost their lives that the whites did not know anything about, because it was not just broadcast a whole lot. He repeated, "So much separation back then. We wasn't together then."

VOOGT: Did everybody read the Brownsville paper at the time?
KING: Oh, I don't know when the Brownsville paper came out, but I'm pretty sure that the paper came out then, they read it.
VOOGT: They would all be reported.
KING: Yeah. Everybody was reported, but it doesn't seem like the blacks back then showed much interest in the white guys.

It was also probably true that if you wanted to get the information from the funeral homes on the radio, you would have to tune in at a certain time in the early morning, and of course, it was easy to miss a broadcast. The *Brownsville States-Graphic*, particularly in the days preceding full integration, was very much a white man's newspaper. Many blacks in the 1960s, according to Ray Dixon, came forth arguing that the paper was biased. In 1964, for example, the newspaper started referring to negroes as blacks instead of the "outdated term" (Dixon's quotation marks) negroes, which was often pronounced as "neg'gra" which was very offensive to blacks. The local paper, as will be seen, changed its direction. Black articles did not appear too often in the paper, because black writers felt that the paper was slanted away from civil rights (Dixon quoting Maude Bond). On the point of illiteracy among blacks Dixon said that blacks showed poor reading and writing skills, but had developed a sense of oral history and oral event recognition, which enabled them to remember and pass on events and instances that literally made them very cognizant of the current events and recent history. Many of the estimates were very high on illiteracy, though.

On the Vietnam veterans:

Leon King argued that many veterans returned and could not get decent

jobs. "And they put their life on the line!" The soldiers that came back did not get recognition and this hurt. "That puts a bad taste in your mouth about it." He was talking about black veterans, but it applied to poor white veterans as well.

On the draft:

His wife's brother had been drafted and that was where the hurt was: "When they draft you to go instead of when you volunteer."

> KING: These guys wanted to stay home and make their lives. But they got called off to the war and all you could hear was the names on the radio. Wasn't like wars now. You stay home and watch it on TV. But that war, all you could do was just hear about, you know, based on the news what was going on, people losing their lives.

Compared to the Gulf War though, the Vietnam War reports did not have the same immediacy that we have become used to since CNN invented direct satellite covering of military operations at the time of Desert Storm. Yet the Vietnam War has been called the first televion war not without reason. Every evening at prime time news flashes from Vietnam would be watched in American homes nationwide. It has since been said that these reports were at least twenty-four hours old, because the film tapes had to be flown out, and also because these reports were edited by older journalists - of World War II vintage often - before they were shown on TV in the U.S. This is one of the frustrations of Neil Sheehan and other reporters of the same generation.

On the South:

> VOOGT: Can I ask you the question, "Tell me about the South today?" What is it like to live in this part of the United States?
> KING: It is the most wonderful love-hate I believe in the world to live in the United States and to live here today. People don't realize how blessed we are, how much freedom we have, how many rights we have. We don't realize how good we have got it now, and live in the condition that we live in now, transportation that we have, communication.
>
> I think today as I sit here and talk to you on one of the most blessed beautiful days that a person can never live in hell. I live in the South; just hard to sum it up how good it is.

And indeed it was not hard to see from what Leon King had just been saying about his personal history that life in the nineties just did not compare with the sixties for black people in the South.

It is a universal phenomenon, perhaps, that people in discussing a longer period in history tend to take an important milestone in the past of their personal lives or in the history of their country, that they use to switch backwards and forwards to from the present. In the U.S. today, the focal point of the past will be the Vietnam War for many generations of Americans. Interestingly, Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, who experienced the Nazi occupation as a child, said that for her it was World War II in Europe. Applied to the South today it seems to me that for the blacks the focal point is the civil rights movement of the 1960s, while for many white Southerners this will still be the Civil War.

For Leon King the War in Vietnam became a reality when his wife's brother went there and, again, when someone he had known was killed. He was not concerned with patriotism or the domino theory as a justification for America's present in Southeast Asia. To him the Vietnam War was reduced to the size of its effect on his family and friends. From the perspective of the 1990s, however, the 1960s to Leon King predominantly were the years when the local population was still segregated along the color line. His example (some of the whites lost their lives that the blacks did not know about) demonstrates this fact.

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(xvii) C.T. SMITH (white)

Christy Keyes Tate met Arthur Fox Smith IV at Vanderbilt University in Nashville. She was a fifth-generation Kentuckian, from Louisville, on her mother's side. Her father was born in Coburn, Virginia, and grew up in Johnson City, Tennessee. Christy received a bachelor's degree in English from Vanderbilt University. She worked for a Nashville publishing house and later in a United States Army hospital in Japan as education advisor and taught Army personnel for the Department of Defense. She became editor of the *Brownsville States-Graphic* in 1985.[154]

One Friday afternoon early in September 1995, the courthouse square in Brownsville lay burning in the sun. Here and there the shade provided by the wide canopies of trees had attracted the cars of the attorneys, store personnel and courthouse officials. The office of the local newspaper was at the Southwestern corner of the square. Christy's office, just round the corner from the reception desk, was pleasantly cool.We talked in her office while the hustle and bustle belonging to the world of

newspapers and print was audible in the background.

Asked about the effects of the Vietnam War and the Civil War, she said she was not really the right person to ask. ("I don't think of myself as much of a Southerner as others do.") She said that Kentucky was not as torn apart by the Civil War as Tennessee and Alabama, Mississippi and Georgia were. Therefore she thought that while Kentucky felt the tragedy of the separation, it did not feel as tragically taken advantage of. Older people in Tennessee still had strongly held feelings. She added, "I think we are divided, if we are divided in any ways in the country, they are cultural ones more than they are remnants of animosities that would be left over from that time."

On Vietnam veterans and the draft:

I asked her how the returning veterans were treated.

> C.T. SMITH: It depends on what part of the country again you are speaking of, because, you know, in the South, we always have treated our war participants with respect. You will not find a campus in the South where people who were drafted or people who participated in the war, were treated in an undignified way or were scoffed at. You will find that at many universities in the North and some in the West, but not in the South. Neither were they welcomed home with tickertape parades.

Did students in the South burn their draft cards? They did not, because she believed that they had always had a more patriotic sense. So, was there a difference between North and South? There was a difference. But where would she draw the dividing line?

> C.T. SMITH: You know the middle part of the country that was not very developed during the Civil War, now plays a part in there too. Where do you place them? And where do you place states like Texas, which was not really the true South? Where do you place Florida, that, you know, is in the southern part of the country, but it was never a Southern state like Alabama or Mississippi or Georgia. Neither was Texas, though they had some political connection with the war. Texas certainly did. Their sentiments are different too. I think-, I doubt Midwesterners scoffed at their draft dodgers.
> VOOGT: What was the reaction down South to the events at Kent State?
> C.T. SMITH: Everybody was horrified at that, just horrified. I would say generally we would not have had a lot of support for

students who were protesting. Nobody understood that or felt - we were not in support of that. But no one would have thought - that was just a tragic error of judgement on the part of some men, who must have panicked. My assumption was that they panicked because they could not possibly have regarded these students as a threat in any way, - physical threat. So that really was a terrible tragedy.

We passed on to her own college days. At Vanderbilt there was very little interest on the part of the students other than the fear among the young men that they would be going to Vietnam. "But if they were called up, would they go?" I asked her. "Oh, yeah," she replied. Was my assumption that the majority of draftees consisted of uneducated men from the farms and from the country correct?

C.T. SMITH: Well, I think it was urban boys as well. We at college were a little insulated, because you could get a deferment if you were a college student. Which placed unfairly the burden of fighting that war on young people, who either were not economically able to be in college, or intellectually able to be in college. So the best and the brightest were exempted until they graduated and then they began to fear what would happen - whether they would have to go. Once they graduated, they either had to teach and get a teaching degree or get a medical deferment or figure some other way to....
VOOGT: What students in fact were called up?
C.T. SMITH: What students? No students. Students were not called. You see, these would have been boys graduated from high school and went to work or did not go to school.
VOOGT: But what about the universities in the North where students protested and burned their draft cards?
C.T. SMITH: They had draft cards, but only because everybody had to register for the draft. Unless they flunked out of school or they lost their eligibility, because they were not taking enough hours. They were all exempt. They were just making the kind of intellectual protests that students generally do. And they knew that when they graduated they were in trouble.
VOOGT: So you would have to find a place in graduate school.
C.T. SMITH: Or begin to teach. And there were many who took the option that Fox (her husband) took, which was to go into the military and to become an officer and to hopefully, not have to be on the front line to fight the battle. I mean, frankly, that is what they were seeking not to have to be on, on the front lines of the killing fields in Vietnam.

The thing about the draft that even then, after so many years, she still felt quite emotional about was to find out at close quarters, who exactly had been drafted to fight in the Vietnam War.

> C.T. SMITH: The tragic part for me, and I was confronted with it first-hand, was seeing who it was that was fighting that war, and what was happening to them, because while maybe the country was thinking the government's thinking was, we'll protect our best minds.[155] The people (the soldiers in Vietnam) had less going for them in the first place, then also became the people who were dramatically injured or psychologically impaired by having fought that war and came back more of a drain on society than they already had been, and they were the ones who were the drain on society anyway, because they were not highly employable. They did not have their educations, may not have had skills, and, you see, now when you go into the military you learn a skill pretty quickly, but in those days guys who were going to Vietnam were only learning how to fight. They did not have a negotiable, marketable skill when they got out of the war. If they were not injured, they did not have anything to come into the workplace with. You know, unless they had been trained as something a little unusual, maybe a communications person with some information, but mostly they were fighting.

The feelings here expressed reflected her experiences in Japan, where her Navy husband, Fox Smith, was stationed for three years. She said that the only connection the Navy, where they were assigned, had with Vietnam was in a supporting role. The people in the Navy who were in Vietnam were not really in high risk areas, unless they were in a patrol boat on one of the rivers. "But we were not there," she said, "we were in a safe area." She went on to say that she worked for the Army in one of their hospitals.

> C.T. SMITH: Now, the hospitals in Japan were staging areas from which the wounded were immediately medivaced. They learned in Vietnam, actually, I guess they would have learned it in Korea and in World War II, to get the injured out of the battle area. That wounds that would not be particularly harmful became septic in a battle condition, and especially, in the tropical kinds of conditions of Vietnam quickly. So if they were stable, they would bring the injured directly from Vietnam to us in Japan. So they came by helicopter on gurneys, strapped to the helicopters and were triaged right at our hospital, right on our helicopter landing.
> VOOGT: What do you mean by "triaged"?

C.T. SMITH: I mean, they are assessed to their - you know, who goes to which area first. Who's seen the quickest and needs the most. And this went on all day. They were flying them in all day. Now the most seriously injured, who could not be moved, stayed in the field hospitals until they could be moved.

I asked her how as an American citizen she felt about the Vietnam War.

C.T. SMITH: I have strong feelings about the war because of working in the hospital. You know that here came every day these boys who had been injured only hours before, and they put them in body casts to transport them. And I was not medical support. I was an education adviser, but I got to speak to so many of them. And I remember I was only twenty-six at the time and I remember being impressed - or twenty-five, or twenty-four, or twenty-three, anyway, I remember looking at them and thinking they're all so young. They're so young. These boys were all eighteen and nineteen. There was not anybody twenty. And I thought, they're going home with no education, and they're missing limbs and [they have a] very, very damaged future. Plus I worried a lot about what kind of emotional impact it would be for them, injured, to return home and not to be welcomed as conquering heroes, but rather as "Oh, well, you poor unfortunate. You had to go where you did not know how to get out of it." It was a very unpopular war and so they would be coming home without the same kind of heroes welcome that previously returning warriors had. But the morale on the wards in Japan was very high, because they were with their buddies and they had all shared the same experience, but once they left, they did not leave as a group. They left singularly and they would be on a ward in the hospital with people they had not been with.

She went on to say that she worked as an educational adviser for the Army for several years. She had started working at the hospital as a Red Cross volunteer, visiting the soldiers, helping them with their shopping and just talking. They did not have anyone to talk to and they wanted to talk. Some of them had not seen any American women in months or years. Christy said that the soldiers were glad to see them. "Many of the wives volunteered and did that." Then she was offered the job of teaching and working to replace someone else who had gone back home. The result was that she was there every day. The injured soldiers were all very young. Their interests did not include politics, and the things they talked about were girl and cars and so on. She said that these boys did not know why they were there. "They were drafted and they went. They were

taught to shoot a gun and they went and they followed orders. And they did not understand the global meaning of it all. They did not think about whether Johnson or McNamara or any of them had put forth a well formed philosophy. They just knew their fathers had gone to World War II and this was the thing to do."

It was reminiscent of a passage in Larry Brown's Vietnam War novel *Dirty Work*, where a soldier, in his memory, wakes up in his mother's home to the smell of biscuits in the morning of the day he will "jump off the world", which is military jargon for "leave the U.S." for Vietnam. His uniform is hanging in his bedroom. The interior monologue following here, reflects the attitude found in the interview I had with citizens and Vietnam veterans of Brownsville and Haywood County: "Soldier of the most powerful nation in the world. And all I could think was Why, you know, why? I did not even understand the whole thing. Just went cause it was my duty. I'm sure there was plenty who went did not understand the whole thing. Just went cause it was their duty. This my country, I'm gonna fight for my country. Sentiment was strong for God and Country, young boys, listen up. Everybody's daddy had been in World War II. Some daddies, anyway."[156]

We discussed Vietnam War books and films. Christy said that she did not really like the Hollywood movie *Born on the Fourth of July*. On the other hand *Fortunate Son* was a book that she thought really brought the Vietnam experience. "The author went into the war with very high ideals and very patriotic sentiment and came out with a different...." Then, "When we were in Japan the movie *M.A.S.H.* came out, which of course would have hosted the Korean War. It would have been about sixty-nine or seventy. We were there and we went to watch it in a theater. I don't know if you remember the movie? We did not like the movie at all. We got up and left. "

> VOOGT: You would not like it, because it was the sort of thing you were daily experiencing.
> C.T. SMITH: That, and the fact that the doctors' attitude in the movie was very sacrilegious and very unconcerned about their patients. They were much more concerned about their own fun about drinking and revelry and partying.

Distinguishing between the movie and the TV series, she added that the movie was facetious and that the humor was very dark. The doctors were not just cynical; the doctors in the TV series were cynical, but they were proud of being doctors. They were proud of saving patients and they cared about them, whereas in the movie they did not care.

She mentioned that Danny Presley of Brownsville had been injured in Vietnam, when she was in Japan. He came to a hospital in Tokyo.

"But," she said, "he left before I found him. It was not our hospital. We got a letter immediately from Fox's mother telling us to go look for him. But by the time we got the letter, he was already gone."

On local servicemen killed in Vietnam:

The first name she remembered was that of Norman Lane, who was killed soon after arriving in Southeast Asia. "He wasn't there a month, I don't think. And it is just so amazing to us that somebody we knew, who we had just seen and partied with at Vanderbilt and gone on, had died." She also mentioned Susan Pettigrew's brother. She added that Susan had been in that day to get the address of congressman John Tanner and others to write to in an effort to get her brother's Purple Heart medal, which had not been issued, and which her father had been trying to get for years to no avail. Susan had told Christy that the Army's response to her query had been that they had "another 10,000 of these". Christy: "The scars linger. They keep lingering; we still see the effects [of the Vietnam War]."

The differences between the South and the rest of America, according to Christy Smith, were cultural rather than otherwise. It showed, for example, in the way the returning Vietnam veterans were treated: with respect, as the result of the patriotism often found in the South. It was patriotism also that explains the South's lack of sympathy for student protests and demonstrations. All this explains why the attitude on Southern campuses generally was one of when your country called, you served.

The tragic thing that was foremost on Christy's mind was that the War in Vietnam was fought by the young men who, for one reason or another, could not get into college. It seemed to her that the American government, through the draft, was safeguarding the nation's "best minds".

(xviii) JAMES SPRINGFIELD (black)

James Springfield was born in Brownsville, Tennessee, on 22 September 1931. During the Korean War he was drafted and served two years in the U.S. Army. Korea was not a bad experience, as he was behind the lines. After his discharge, he stayed out approximately eighty days, re-enlisted, and went back to do another three years at Fort Bliss, Texas, where he was a cook and assistant mess-hall sergeant. I met James Springfield one day in August 1996, at the counter of Jeff Hooper's Brownsville Express. He had followed the Vietnam War from the beginning. The large loss of life made him think that the war should have been avoided. Nor had he comprehended the reason for the war. Therefore he repeated that it

should have been avoided. He said, "We lost so many men on both sides and, you know, their lives were cut very short. And war is always a terrible thing. But, you know, the Bible speaks of wars, and rumors of war. So maybe there is no way to get around it." Some of James Springfield's friends had lost their lives in Vietnam.

> SPRINGFIELD: One young man was a friend of mine I went to school with. His name was Tyrone Austin, and he lost his life. And he had a wife and a small daughter. And I missed him very much and I'm sure his family did. I think about him quite frequently. There were others, you know, that I think about as well. We lost several people from Brownsville and Haywood County. One of the names was Young. There were several lost their lives here, white and black.

On the draft:

Some of his friends who had gone to Vietnam had volunteered, while some had been drafted.

> SPRINGFIELD: Some of the boys will go in to try to further their education. Some of them can finish college while they are in service, and really that is one of the reasons when I went. When I was drafted in, I did not want to go, 'cause I did not want to leave my family, and so I did two years and I came back. I stayed around about eighty days and I could not find work to do, so I said, "Well, maybe I'll go back in the Army."

For many poor people the advantages of an Army career were obvious. It meant a regular income as well as an education in many cases, and an opportunity to save money, which was invested in property by men like Springfield, who was in the race-horse business at the time of the interview.

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(xix) DR. BENNY HOPPER (white)

Benny Hopper was born in Rutherford, Tennessee, on March 7, 1938, to Ben and Lois Hopper. He was graduated from Rutherford High School, from Lambuth College in 1960, and from the Seminary of Methodist Theological School in Ohio, 1963. He was in his high school Drama Club, lettered in basketball and was a State Farmer in 1955. He was selected as the Ministerial Student of the year in 1959-60, while at Lambuth. He was awarded the Doctor of Ministry degree from Lambuth University in 1993. Since Seminary, he has served the following appointments:

1960-63	Pickwick Charge
1963-69	Center-Rehoboth Charge
1969-74	Finley Parish
1974-80	St. Andrew in Jackson
1980-86	Humboldt First United Methodist
1986-91	Brownsville First United Methodist
1991-95	Asbury United Methodist in Memphis
1995-	Memphis Conference Council Director

Benny Hopper is married to the former Gail Wright, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Marion Wright of Brownsville. Before moving to the Council staff, Benny Hopper served on the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry, Work Areas on Mission and Higher Education, Group Insurance, the CCOM Board, the Conference Nominating Committee and the Council on Finance and Administration. He has also served on the District Council on Ministries, as a supervising pastor and led his post-seminary peer group for two years. He was a Scout Master, past president of the Rotary Club and member of the Methodist Haywood Park Hospital Board and hospital trustee for four years. He is presently a member of the Lambuth University Board of Trustees and the Board of Methodist Outreach.

On 7 August 1996, we talked about the Vietnam War and the South in Dr. Benny Hopper's home in Jackson, Tennessee. We had first met in 1986 in Brownsville. He first talked about his memories of the 1960s, which was a time of great political change. Kennedy's Catholic background caused much polarization, but Benny Hopper voted for John Kennedy. In 1963 he had been offered a commission, but he had not accepted it, primarily because the younger brother of his wife's mother had been killed at Okinawa "and she just had a horror of something like that and it affected my being involved [in Vietnam] even as a chaplin".

On anti-war protests:

Dr. Hopper stated that the people who were protesting the war were considered to be hippies. They were the long-haired folks, the Volkswagen gang, who dressed in tattered clothes and people were repelled. He went on to say that a number of people in the West Tennessee area had a hard time with that. Protests were mainly something that was on TV. "In this area you did not have as much of that in terms of student protest." There were some campus ministry groups that led some demonstrations in terms of Vietnam. "But," he said, "this area here is more traditional, I think, in how they respond and you did not have near as many students who were involved in that kind of thing."

VOOGT: Do you think that the South was different in its response to this?
HOPPER: I think so. I think that the South was more conservative, more traditional. You know, they have a tendency to be more patriotic, in that sense of the word and I think the South had a harder time accepting the fact that the government was wrong.

On the Vietnam War:

At what point did people notice that things were going the wrong way?

HOPPER: Well, I think it was really even after the war was over. Because, as I look at it, even during the war especially there was a lot of bitterness toward Jane Fonda. Even now there are still people who have never forgiven her, because she was called in this area Hanoi Jane.[157]

And there are some other individuals who were involved in that, but the people just had a hard time accepting, they were very angry and as a result of it, now we know in some cases that what they did really created more of a problem in terms of the prolonging of the war as a whole. And then I think there is still some feeling in this area here, that had it not been for the media and the people like Jane Fonda or whatever who gave North Vietnam a false impression. And then [there are] some individuals in the South who still have not been able to forgive people for us losing it (the Vietnam War).
VOOGT: I have talked to some people, who were in the military, who say that the politicians should not have interfered.
HOPPER: The feeling was that you were fighting with your hands tied behind you, or at least one hand tied behind your back. It was really frustrating. Bill Blakewell was in my church at Humboldt. He

> served two terms in Vietnam and he really had a hard time. He felt like - and there were a number of soldiers - and I think that is one reason why people have responded so as they have to the Vietnam Memorial - , they felt like there were people who really gave themselves for what they understood was a cause and yet when they came home, they were treated like nothing. And they were really almost spat upon, some of them were. Because of what had happened in the media and all across the country in terms of the way the war was presented back home. And there is so much anger and *bitterness* and hurt and we probably have a larger number of Vietnam soldiers who have wound up in terms of being an alcoholic or drug [addict] or homeless than any other time in the history of war.

The problems experienced by the returning soldiers from Vietnam, he said, resulted from the fact that there was no closure. The soldiers came home not to celebration, but, instead, they were treated as though they were the enemy. Although this generally was the picture of the greater part of the United States, as appeared from radio, TV, and the newspapers, he made an exception for the area where he lived at that time. "Where I lived there was a different story than what you saw in the media and I remember I was living outside Dyersburg, and some prisoners of war were finally secured and one of them was a local boy, and there was a great outpouring of people for those soldiers. But, you know, in the small communities like that, it was different." In the rest of the nation it was not that way, and he remembered that the soldiers were very bitter. Explaining the difference in treatment in the Southern city of Dyersburg, he said, "Part of that is in terms of the conservatism - the South is more conservative, basically. It does more - it is more patriotic in many ways. In some ways - now, it depends on how you define patriotism, I guess. But again, in the sense of family and community, that was a big part of that, because regardless of what people may have felt about the war, these were children who grew up in the community and they were sons and daughters of their neighbours and people they knew and they rallied around and responded to them." Therefore the veterans who returned to places like the city of Memphis and other places, who did not have that sense of community that surrounded them when they came home, had a tough time.

On the South:

We passed on to talk about the South. He asked me, "Do you know places like Savannah?"

HOPPER: You immediately see how important their history and their heritage is to them.

VOOGT: Why is history so important in the South?

HOPPER: I wish I knew for sure. I don't know. That is an interesting question, because I wonder - because a number of the people who were in the South, even the plantation owners as well, came from Europe. And see, again, that may have been a part of that. But again the South, I think, part of the story is that we have a strong feeling and sense of family and we want to know our connectiveness. You are talking about mother, father, and grandparents and great-grandparents and people are very conscious of their family tree.

VOOGT: The genealogy department in the local library is large.

HOPPER: It is a phenomenon again, that is almost unique to the South. And you will find it not just in Brownsville, but you will find it in other places too in the South. Tabernacle Camp started with the family, the Taylor family.[158] And you see, again it is a coming together of people that are scattered all over the world, and they come. They come home for this unique event. But it is again connecting this family. That is a big part of that as well as the religious heritage. And we were talking about Vietnam a few moments ago and the area here and why people from the South, especially rural South, responded, more so than the metropolitan areas. But there is a tendency, I think, in the rural South to take their religious faith and their love of country, and they are almost synonymous - connected, tied together, not completely, but what I mean, it is love of country and patriotism. It is almost like a religious commitment in terms, for a number of people. They, you know, in terms of some small little churches, they've had a hard time separating those two. It has created some problems at times.

VOOGT: What else defines the South? What other things do people in the South value, besides family, religion, and patriotism?

HOPPER: I think independence. You know, if you look in the South, you have a large number of farmers, small farmers. That is a kind of independent lifestyle. The frontier is no longer here and you don't have that rugged individualism. It is called a carry-over from that and you will find a lot of independent-thinking people in the South.

"There is a great love of land in the South. The whole sense of being is tied up with the land," Hopper said. His explanation of these typical Southern characteristics is echoed and elaborated on by J. Wayne Flynt (*Dixie's Forgotten People: The South's Poor Whites*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington,1979), who argues that the South was a frontier much longer than most of America. Not only in the sense that people in

the South did not have much in the way of resources; they had to hunt, they had to fish, they had to live close to the land. Nor were there institutions to soften society, such as churches, and school. Contrary to the image that Southerners have of themselves as being super-religious people, they tended to solve their problems very individualistically, as they did almost everything else and as a result "there is just an amazing amount of violence".

The frontier mentality accounts for the distinctive features of many Southerners. It helps to explain the attachment to the land, the innate violence and the rugged individualism.

HOPPER: Much of it stemmed from the fact that America was seen as a promised land, especially for Southerners, and I guess for people all over the North, but especially here in the Bible Belt, it was almost like the people of Israel going to the promised land and finding their land. And for a lot of people as they talk about Thanksgiving here, and wherever they tell their story, it is almost like -, these people migrated here from different parts of Europe, from different parts of the world, - that this was the land of promise God had given them. And to be fruitful, whatever, and it was almost to the point, I think, where people felt like that we were God's special unique place of people and that after World War I and World War II, and whatever else and the Korean War was very difficult, and very painful, but the Vietnam War was very painful, because it was almost like the resurrection of the soul and the spirit, because we had to examine our whole sense of being and understanding if we were people of destiny, you know. And people, who, - God had called us into being, as people had an image of themselves, like the people of Israel. Then how could we lose this war? Was it that like in ancient times - God once again saying, "I'm displeased with you." What is happening? There was a lot of that kind of thing in the rural South, in rural America, as you wrestled with that kind of understanding.

And then on the other hand there was a lot of anger, because the feeling was that we were not given a chance to win. And that in the South - it is conservative basically, though the leadership was liberal, and they felt like they were being undercut by this liberal establishment that saw things so differently, and were destroying you and your America. So there was a lot of wrestling. And on the other hand there was also a lot of soul searching, to say what could it be? That we were wrong. And if we were wrong, why? What have we done? You know, have, like the ancient people of Israel, have we abandoned God's creed? Have we ceased to be His people? Or have we become materialistic? And so, again, you will find even now that even after the war is over there is still a lot of

soul searching going on about our sense of materialism.

America is one of those unique places where we have a hard time celebrating our success. We want to chastise ourselves with a lot of brow beating and we do a lot of soul searching, and criticism, even, I don't know if you see across the board in terms of television, radio, the church as a whole, we have a hard time celebrating success. It is much easier to deal with our failures.

He went on to say that the religious feelings of the present-day South went back to the old days of Jonathan Edwards and others. In the South a kind of a revivalism came into being that in a way took people to resemble "naughty children", and the Bible was used to "beat them over the head with".

On the MIAs:

We went over several other topics, comparing also World War I and World War II on the one hand - when they were over they were over - and the Vietnam War on the other, where American servicemen basically did a tour of duty and then came home, while the war continued. Benny Hopper said that according to some there still were some men there. It has continued to be a controversial subject in American politics to the present day. The idea, whether a myth or not, is kept alive by such Hollywood movies as *Rambo First Blood, Part II*, where one Vietnam veteran, with superhuman qualities, an epic hero of sorts, shows up the U.S. government represented by a hedonistic, self-serving colonel with a taste for politics, by proving beyond any doubt that the U.S. government has betrayed its own soldiers, the MIAs.

HOPPER: That has been a very difficult thing to deal with. I think in terms of the whole South as you look at that, because of our emotional ties, you know, as we talked about earlier in terms of all this, I think that the people in the South also felt like the Vietnam soldiers. They felt betrayed by their country and by their government. And they did not feel that they were truly represented by the people in Washington. That is why you are espying in the South a resurgence, - you know, the Republican party was almost dead in the South until ten to fifteen years ago. And now there is a resurgence of that and because of conservatism it is a part of our story that everybody cannot identify with, but, you know, there is still a strong two-party system here, but there is a resurgence of conservatism.

Truman was seen as a true hero in the South, a true conservative. Harry Truman is still across both party lines, see. Even Republicans will talk about Harry Truman. But once you get past Harry Truman,

you see, it is a different story. They see that the Democratic party is the party they betrayed. Now, some of us had to deal with the integration issue and will have to claim that up front. That was involved in that.

In the South there have been things that we have had to deal with and one was [integration], again because of our strong heritage and family lifestyle and it is part of our tradition and our story. I think of one lady, I remember being a young preacher and talking about the issue and my stand in terms of integration and how I felt that God claimed all persons and loved them equally and Christ died for all persons. And as we were talking about that kind of thing, she said to me, "Well, in essence, what you are asking us to do is completely deny our history. You know, you're asking us to undo our story." And she looked at her father and her grandfather and all were a story and a certain lifestyle and a culture. She saw me as someone wanting to hurt or completely change that or disown part of that. I had a hard time dealing with her.

So, you know, you tie them up together and bring it all through. Vietnam has been another one of those things.

From the Southern perspective of Dr. Hopper, the Vietnam War was a war that America was not allowed to win (you were fighting with one hand tied behind your back). Those protesting the war, again from a Southern perspective, were stereotyped as long-haired hippies. Being more patriotic and more conservative than the rest of America, the South had a hard time accepting America's mistakes in Southeast Asia. To the present day there are some individuals in the South who feel that the American government deserted them; they are still angry with the government for losing the war.

An important characteristic that Southerners share, in the view of Dr. Hopper, is what he calls the *connectiveness* of people. It is seen in the strong sense of family, the popularity of genealogy departments in the libraries everywhere in the South, as well as in the phenomenon of family camps scheduled throughout the South in the summer. Another characteristic found among Southerners, according to Dr. Hopper, is individualism or independence, which he illustrated by pointing at the large number of relatively small farmers in the South.

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(xx) BOB MOSES (white)

Robert Y. Moses was born in Brownsville, Tennessee, on July 14, 1930. At the time of the interview in 1995, he was engaged in part-time banking, and working for a travel agent in Jackson. He is also a substitute teacher. I have known him since 1986.

In the Elma Ross library in Brownsville we discussed the Vietnam War. He first talked about the initial stages of American involvement in Southeast Asia: "My understanding ... is that president Eisenhower, general Eisenhower, as president, signed the SEATO Agreement, the Southeast Asia Treaty. And that committed us - this country - to defend the countries of Southeast Asia against the communist tyranny and halt down there. So, we were bound by that. Whether we should have signed it or not, that is another question." He remembered president Kennedy sending in the first advisers and thinking, "this is a repeat of Korea". Here, too, advisers were sent in first, followed by military troops. The next thing was that they were involved in a full-scale war. Almost as an afterthought he said, "And, of course, the first American who lost his life in Vietnam was a Tennessean." He remembered his response to this when the news got through: "I said, 'Here someone from our state is gotten killed over there already.' We did not learn the lesson in Korea. They never called that a war. They called that a police action." In Vietnam, just like in Korea before, the United States committed themselves half-heartedly. He felt that America was repeating the mistakes of the Korean War in Vietnam.

MOSES: Back to Vietnam. We have the same thing. We were going in there again. We did not learn this lesson. We committed ourselves politically with this treaty signing and we are getting them assistance, military assistance, and why can't they see, Dean Rusk and Lyndon Johnson and all, McNamara, or the government -, see, that we are doing the same thing we did. I can sit here at home and see that! Why can't they see that? And Lyndon Johnson would not stop that war. They kept flying B52s in there, but they would not go in with enough force in there to stop, to put the lethal blow to the enemy. I guess they were fearing the Chinese hoards from the North would come down and get in the fight. But they would never do it. And in that little piece of land we lost over 50,000 American lives and we look at it now and people are very bitter. And we really still now don't give those veterans respect. They are really not respected now. And those men went over there and gave the ultimate. And they lost legs. They lost limbs. They lost everything. A lot of them lost their families, their wives.

And they fought for this soil and this flag and yet they did not get

> the respect. Now, they put this monument up there and that has helped. In Washington they have done that. But I look at this simply as a tragedy that we repeated again - 1952. It happened again a generation later.

On Vietnam veterans:

The people of Brownsville and Haywood County were not hostile at all toward the returning soldiers, who were respected as veterans of the war. "But, generally, nationally, that era of servicemen who fought in that war in that far off land, did not receive the respect." To indicate the difference between the veterans of the Korean War and the Vietnam War, he said, "Well, my group, my generation that served in the Korean conflict, we always felt very proud that we were called upon and we went to serve. And I can hold my chest out and say, 'I was a veteran.' And I'm proud to tell anybody that I went and I did not object to it. My country called and I responded and I served and I feel that we all were a very proud lot."[159]

On the attitude to the Vietnam War in the South:

Was there a difference in attitude to the Vietnam War between the South and the rest of the United States?

> MOSES: I think the point when the Southern part of the U.S., which followed the national feeling is when that war was about halfway through, four or five years, and we were shown that we were not winning the war. We were still putting troops over there. They were being killed, but there was not progress. And we felt eventually, we felt like we were being deceived by the government. We felt that we were not getting the true facts out of Washington.

Moses does not really answer the question. It may well be that the question only partly registered, for I distinctly remember that throughout the interview he kept comparing the War in Vietnam to the Korean War. What still angered him was that the American government did not learn from the Korean War and made the same mistakes in Vietnam. Perhaps he misinterpreted my question, for he does answer in a certain fashion. In his answer he indicates that the difference between the South and the rest of the country was that the South was a little slower in in expressing its opinion about the war. Dealing with the same subject, Dr. George Moss, Jr., argued that the feeling about the Vietnam War in the South had always been that America was doing the right thing. Moss denied that the

South was slower than the rest of the United States, but that the South was more patriotic and that feelings about war in the South were different.

When asked to explain the lack of confidence in the government, Moses said that they could not see progress. He failed to understand why a powerful nation like America could not conquer some of the enemy's territory, and went on to say that president Lyndon Johnson and president Nixon for some reason did not want to win the war. He was quite positive about the fact that they could have won the war. He also believed that "enough threat with the atomic war could have made some changes there", and that America might even have used the bomb. The reason why it was not used was that they were afraid of the Chinese. "But we did have the arsenal to destroy and annihilate that part of the world, and I think maybe enough threats that they would have backed off. But the Vietcong never backed off. I mean, they were tough soldiers." His feelings at the time were that America should either pull out or win the war.

On student protests:

Although there were student protests in Memphis, they did not receive the national prominence that Kent State did. As Bob Moses put it, "Down here in the so-called Bible Belt things were a little more reserved." There was not much law breaking in Memphis, but there were "pockets of protests" in the city.

> VOOGT: In what way did they protest?
> MOSES: They would march and use the peace sign. . . They'd have music and then these musical groups would come in and arouse them. Peter, Paul, and Mary, *If I Had a Hammer*, you know.[160]
>
> There was a great deal of exodus to Canada in Memphis. A number of people disappeared to Canada. They were just not going [to Vietnam]. And at first I thought that was a great lack of patriotism. And as the war went on I said, "You know, these kids are right. We are not going to end this war." It is insane to follow the government of this country; and we saw that they were wrong. They were wrong and McNamara now has admitted it. It has been on his conscience so long, before he died he wanted to admit it.

Bob Moses had very strong feelings about the Vietnam War. It was incomprehensible to him why the government failed to see that it was repeating the mistakes America had made in the Korean War, of which Moses was a veteran. It was obvious to him that Dean Rusk, Johnson and McNamara did not want to win the Vietnam War, because, he suspected,

they were afraid of the Chinese. The South was slow to realize, slower at least than the rest of America, that the United States were not winning the war and the South felt betrayed by its own government, according to Moses. He remembered there were student protests in Memphis and draft dodgers who went to Canada.

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(xxi) MALTIMORE BOND (black)

The owner and president of Golden Circle Insurance, Maltimore Bond was born in Brownsville, Tennessee, on October 17, 1933. He spent about thirteen years away from Brownsville to return in 1964 to work in the business founded by his father-in-law, Charles Allen Rawls in 1934.

On 8 August 1996 a receptionist took me to Maltimore Bond's office. First I asked how long his family had been in Haywood County. He replied that his grandfather on his father's side was a sheriff during the Reconstruction. His great-grandfather was a brickmason, also called Maltimore Bond, who worked on the courthouse. He went on to say, "I don't know exactly if he was a slave, but I don't know if he bought his freedom or how it came, but anyway, he got his freedom."

On the Vietnam War:

The years of the Vietnam War were troublesome times. He had two brothers that were in the service during that period, one of whom actually went to Vietnam. He had mixed emotions about the war. "It was felt by most people that it was something that should not have happened." His brother was drafted into the Vietnam War.

> Maltimore BOND: It was not a very good experience; he talks about it periodically now. [It was] very stressful. I don't think there was any area, from what I can understand, that was completely safe there, because even the kids would come up with some kind of device that could destroy you, and you were always fearful and I remember on one occasion, he shot something, but it was not -, he did not kill anything. But he mentioned something about, you know, just being so jittery, so uptight. But it was very stressful, he said.

Because Maltimore Bond was in the funeral business, the Vietnam War came to affect his life in another way. He buried two of the local people

that died in Vietnam: Tyrone Austin was one, the other's last name was Young, he remembered. "They're buried right out there by our house. They got the military funeral, shipped in military caskets, a 21-gun salute. They got the whole works."

On Vietnam veterans:

What sort of a welcome did Maltimore Bond's brother get when he returned from Vietnam? "Just family," he replied. The people of Brownsville were always warm to returning soldiers, but there was no special turnout for the soldiers returning from Vietnam. But just the family, glad that they returned without being injured in any way. We passed on to talk about politics. Did they discuss politics at home?

> BOND: We just kind of put that on the back burner, because it was one of those things that we could not do too much about at that time. You could become a conscientious objector or either serve your country. We were always taught to serve. Out of the six boys, five served in the Army, two in the Korean War, two in the Vietnamese War, and I between them. I went between. So I was in the peacetime. I was in two years; I went to Japan. We believe in serving the country, so politics, I guess, was kind of left up to the politicians, more or less. We did not get into that much.

The reference to Bond's grandfather and great-grandfather have the effect of bringing the ante-bellum South and the days of Reconstruction within grasp. At present patriotism is one of the characteristics of the South; it is also found among Bond's family. He and his brothers "were always taught to serve"; one of them actually served in Vietnam.

(xxii) REESE MOSES (white)

In the genealogy department of the Elma Ross library I spoke with Reese Moses about the South and the 1960s on 6 August 1996. Genealogy and Reese Moses are synonymous. She has had her own page in the local *Brownsville States-Graphic* for many years. People from every cranny and corner of the U.S. correspond with her or visit her at the library in an attempt to find a missing link in their family trees. As her profession demands, she is very patient and well organized, and not without a sense of humor. She first told me a little about her own family tree. She is

descended from the Jacocks family, who originally came from England, and arrived in the New World in 1823. Her mother was a Reese; the Reese family came from Wales. She had lived in Haywood County all her life, and compared herself to Peter Rabbit in the Briar Patch. She liked it where she was and vacations did not really appeal to her. Having lived in Haywood County all her life, she knows the area like no-one else.

Most families in the area were interested in family. That does not imply that they all get down to the genealogy. She said many people were satisfied with what was handed down to them. Reese Moses, however, did not go in for that and still does not, as the *Brownsville States-Graphic* demonstrates to the present day. She said, "I want to dig and get those records and see why we did what we did." Returning to the description of her family tree, she said of her ancestor that he was on the first county court, and that his aunt was married to Richard Nixon, who was the founder of Haywood County. Mr. Nixon had arrived from North Carolina and married Ann Jacocks. They had six children. Ann died in North Carolina. He remarried, came here and wrote back to my family. The story that was handed down was that he owed the Jacockses some money and he said that if they would come to work where the Indians were friendly, he would get them land for the money he owed them. "So great-granddaddy loaded up the ox-cart and off he came," she said, "and I live today within two miles, - it is about a mile I guess, hardly a mile from the supposed old Indian trail that they came down. And the Jacocks cemetery is about a mile in the other direction from where I'm living today. Although I'm not living on the spot that my grandfather settled on, it is mighty close. And I feel real good about it."

> VOOGT: People in the South are really attached to the land, aren't they?
> R. MOSES: They really are. I felt like I just had to have a little land. I felt that way myself. So I have seven acres. You know, originally we did not have anything but land. That is where the value was. Had to take the land, that was the foundation of everything.

We passed on to talk about the 1960s and the Vietnam War. I asked her what she could remember. When she thought about that time it was the hard time she was having as a family that she remembered. Reese Moses did not have a really secure family. Her parents lived across the street and helped her considerably. She said her husband was a good man, but she finally had to get a divorce after twenty-three years for non-support. He was a good man, but he just could not handle money. She said, "And I could see we were going to lose our home, we were going to lose everything." Therefore when she thought of the sixties that is what came to mind. She had to get out and get a job. First she worked in "the cotton

office" and later she went to the Board of Education. She said, "I had a black woman to come in and then later I had another one. They were just like one of the family." Then, in 1957, she started to work for the Jackson newspaper, while she already was the local correspondent for *The* [Memphis] *Commercial Appeal*. Subsequently she also worked for Associated Press and United Press International, as well as for *The Tennessean*.

Her work for the newspapers and the networks coincided with the upheaval concerning civil rights. This cast Reese Moses in an important role, for it was basically her reports that formed the basis for articles and editorials in the regional and national newspapers. She said that *Lifting the Veil*, a fairly recent publication on the civil rights in Brownsville and Haywood County, written by a black man, gave the full picture from a black standpoint.[161] She believed it was in 1940 that the Ku Klux Klan became active, which was connected with the beginning of the NAACP. She graduated from high school in 1942.

R. MOSES: I just vaguely remember them finding a body in the Hatchie River. But they took this man out and lynched him, the story goes in that book, and, of course, that is the story that I have heard all these years. And then they threw his body in the river. They took another man, they abducted another man from his house at the same time, but he was returned to his home. I don't think he ever returned to his home. He left the town and left the county, and ended up North and sent for his family. So there was a lot of upheaval in the county... I remember across the Hatchie River on the south part of the county, right over across the river, there was a white lady, who, people said, was contributing to the stirring of the blacks. She was a good friend of mine later and I could not imagine her doing that. I think she was a very fair person. She just did not grow up here. And there's a lot of difference in the people that grew up here like I did with a [black] cook living in a little house in the back yard.

When I was born there was a big black mammy in my kitchen and my mother tells me that I cried a lot more when Nanny died than I did when my grandmother died (chuckling), because she just about raised me until she died, when I was about nine years old. She was family. She was cooking in the house when mother and daddy married. When you have had a relationship with them like that all of your life, and have lived as long as I have, you can't disown them. I could not have to save my life.

I had a car with three drive up to my house Saturday night, and it was one that worked for me nearly twenty years. I kissed her on the cheek. I was so glad to see her. She was just like a mother and everybody who worked for me was that way. So, we feel

differently.

Then, there's a lot of other people who don't feel like I do. They've lived here always, but they - I don't know why they don't, but they don't feel like I do about it. They've been here all their lives too. But, of course, I get close to people. Maybe too close. Most people deep down feel like I do. They don't want to show it, though. And there have been a lot of hard feelings in the county over that.

What Reese Moses was saying made sense. It tied in with my observance of encounters between black and white people in the South. I still have pictures in my mind of one scene in particular. It was in the spring of 1987 that one of our friends explored Haywood County with my family, driving along country lanes. As we were talking about the cotton fields and the old days, he said he would take us to see an old black man who used to work for his daddy. As we slowly approached the simple wooden structure where the old black man lived, we saw him sitting on the porch with a family member. Our friend stopped the car, rolled down the window, and exchanged greetings and said he wanted to introduce us. Then, with some difficulty the old man got up and walked over to the car, and was genuinely pleased to greet our friend, and the feeling was mutual, we could see. What was characteristic, though, was that the black and white social structure of the past was still unaltered. Our friend never got out of the car.

Reese Moses passed on to the post-1957 period, which was when she started work, as she put it, "full-time on a part-time basis for the newspapers".

R. MOSES: There was a man here in Brownsville, who was head of the local Ku Klux Klan. They got that back going again actively. They burned a cross on the courthouse yard one night. They would burn crosses in yards of people who were involved in the NAACP. As I said a while ago, I think the NAACP was the beginning of it, then the KKK stepped in. They were involved with the taking of that child, of that young man. They wanted to find out from these men who all were involved in the NAACP. Then, from there the KKK gained momentum. Then the voting rights took over. And they (the blacks) started registering and people - we - stood around and watched them going in like it was a sideshow. I had to report every day. I would go to the courthouse every day between four and five to find out how many blacks had registered that day. And I turned it in to the paper. I never did know why they wanted to know. I thought that was rather far-fetched, but I did it. And they sent a man from the Justice Department; I can't think of his name,

down here. He had an office in the Postmaster's office. He stayed in there. He checked on it.

At Mount Eagle, Tennessee, there was a school to train the blacks how to do all this. There were some people, a woman named Virgie Haverstein, who brought some people down from up North. I can't recall where, I have got information on that at home. It may be in my papers that you've already seen. She lived out south of the river, the Hatchie River, in Haywood County, with some black people. You can imagine how that went over! She had a school and she taught the people how to vote, how to register. The blacks that I had worked with at the Board of Education were more educated blacks and looked down on this. They said the blacks had come so far, because I remember one older teacher told me. She said, "When I started teaching, I could not teach those children how to read and write. I had to teach them how to keep clean, how to use a bar of soap. They hadn't had any of that." So, they were making progress within their own group, but they got too anxious. Maybe I'm wrong about that, that is the way I see it. The people out in this area resented this woman and her crowd being out there. And they were not very nice-looking people. They were people, very "hippie-type" that you really thought they did not have anything better to do or they would be doing it. I think I met one or two nice young men that came to work with them from a college, I think they were from MIT, in the summer. They were so nice and they were genuinely concerned, genuinely interested in wanting to really help them. But from there they went to the freedom farms. They had the "freedom farms" where they had Tent City over in Fayette County, right across the line for the people that had supposedly lost -, been put off the places where they had lived.

The "freedom farms" merged into Tent City. They put up tents and they created this area in Fayette County for the people who needed a place to live.

A lot of farmers, landowners -, they found out that blacks were doing this (getting registered for the vote), and activists in this voting field, they made them move.

VOOGT: Just told them that they could no longer live -

R. MOSES: No longer live there; they did not need their services anymore. The farmers were becoming more mechanized and they were able to get along without so many blacks anyway.

VOOGT: Was this about the time the cotton no longer needed to be picked by hand?

R. MOSES: Well, that was coming into being too. All this kind of came together. They did not need them so much and they were causing problems, so they said, "Go." That is the way I see it. My father had sold his farm and I was away from the farming side of it. I was, well by '57, not only was I working for the newspaper part-

time, I was running an insurance and real estate agency. So I traveled the county, because I sold farm insurance, that was my line of insurance.

VOOGT: So you knew the farmers really well?

R. MOSES: I knew the farmers all over the county.

We wandered over several other topics, including the free food program, which developed into the Food Stamp program, which was more satisfactory, since all parties benefitted from it. Then we moved on to talk about the South.

R. MOSES: I'm a die-hard Southerner. I have read *Gone With the Wind* so many times and never missed the movie. When it is on I always see it. I may not see it in its entirety, but I don't have to. I bought the little book they've made from Margaret Mitchell's letters that were found by this son of a former beau. I read it last week. I had not read the first fifteen pages of those letters before I called Walden Books in Jackson and had them send a copy of that book to my 16-year-old granddaughter who is in Arkansas. She reminded me so much of Margaret Mitchell when she was sixteen. That is how old she was when she wrote this little story. I love the book. The story was very mediocre, but well written for a 16-year-old. And I had them mail that to my granddaughter.

VOOGT: I was asking you about the South and you sort of described *Gone With the Wind.*

R. MOSES: I would have been very happy, living in those days. As a child I tended to fight the Civil War on the South's side until I grew up and did research on my mother's family and found that I had a great-grandfather who was on the Union side and several other ancestors who were in the Union Army. I had several also on the Confederate side. As a matter of fact my Union great-grandfather, my great-great-grandfather fought against his son. He was in the Confederate Army. That was not unusual. They were from East Tennessee and East Tennessee was very divided, more Union I think, than Southern. But when I was a little girl I read all about it and I heard a lot about it because it hadn't been that long. Like today, it has been about then like today is to World War II and World War I. So you heard more about it then. It was more alive. And I was a child living out in the country and I was the only child for seven years, and I had a vivid imagination. I read books far beyond my years.

I have a love for the South. I laughed when I started working here (in the genealogy department at the library), when I first came to work, I said, "It is like black and white up there." Ms. Stevenson

(the librarian) is a Yankee, and she's lived here, but there is a difference in us. I am the only native here. And it is just like daylight and dark. And, of course, she at first got her feelings hurt, because people would come in and ask for the volunteer, me. It was because they knew me and they had known me all my life. Brownsville is very clannish, I'm sure.

Brownsville is very friendly, but, then, you reach a certain point and they clam up.

What other characteristics defined the South? I wanted to know. "It is culture," she said. "The hoop skirts and the gentlemen riding up on their horses." She raised horses and loved them. I could see why she loved *Gone With the Wind.* She said there was a very decided class distinction. It had diminished, and it was not as it had been, but in the small towns like Brownsville, Bolivar, and Summerville, it was still noticeable. "These towns have Southern history," she said. "You're still going to find it." Further characteristics of Southern culture that she valued were: manners, good food - and plenty. "You want to have a lavish sideboard. And if they want to take some home, that is fine. Just like camp meetings that is going on right now. That is typical of the South."

Talking about Tabernacle Camp, where food was plentiful, she used it to further define the South, saying, "They 're generous, they take you in. You have that Southern hospitality and you realize there are [a great many] people out there right now and they say, 'Come eat supper with us tonight.' I think that is typical of the South. It (Tabernacle Camp) is known all over the United States for its Southern hospitality. Probably more than for its religion."

On Tabernacle Camp:

R. MOSES: It is family and religion. On Sunday afternoon after you eat lunch, you go back to the church and they have a love feast. The love feast is in memory of those who have died since the last service, revival, or get-together, and the ones who have gone on before that even. It is a love feast for all of those gone. It is really a wonderful time. I used to stay when I was a girl.

VOOGT: What would they do on a typical day like today?

R. MOSES: They get up and go to sunrise service. I think it is at 7:30 if it has not changed, and I don't remember them changing anything out there. And they get a bath. Then they have something for the children at 9:30, then they have church at 10:00, I think. There's a lot of singing in the service. Then they have the preaching and then they go eat lunch. And after lunch the older people take a nap, they try to get the children to take a nap, and then they tend to their business and the ladies get the supper started. They have a

meeting with the ones in the kitchen. Interestingly enough, the kitchens, most of them, they all had wood stoves when I was out there in the building built behind the house we slept in. Many black families stayed in the camp to do the cooking.

They (black families) go to church, they go to work with the whites. They do the cooking and there are black women that are known for their grand muffins, their whole wheat muffins. We always call them grand muffins. My cousin used to have a grist mill that he cranked up in August and got the flour ground for those muffins. What you buy in the store doesn't taste like that! Oh, they are so good! And after I was grown and married, he would call me and tell me he was fixing to grind some flour if I wanted some, and I would get some from him. Then after that they get supper started. And then they sit around and talk and they visit. Play horseshoes, they did things like that. Carving walking sticks was a big thing when I was growing up and I know it was when my children were growing up. They would get out and cut a stick in the woods and see who could make it the prettiest. Then they have supper at 6:00 and then they go back to church. Then after church there were watermelons cut, icecream served... And the young people would go courting on the tombstones in the cemetery. I have sat on them many-a-times.

Reese Moses went on to say that other characteristics of the South were its slow pace and its rural quality. Perhaps it is the rural quality of the major towns in the South that distinguishes them from the real big cities in the rest of the country. Memphis, Nashville, but also Birmingham, and even Atlanta possess a rural quality that sets them apart from New York and Chicago and L.A. Reese Moses did not think that the temperature had anything to do with it. "We have just always been that way. We come from people who did not have to work. We had somebody to work for us - the slaves." She went on to say, "I think most Southerners lean toward the niceties of life, the ultra. I noticed when I went, for instance, when I took my mother to the bicentennial train - well, mother wanted to go. She doesn't usually want to do something, but she has an electric wheelchair. I put her in the van and off we went. There was one of Brownsville's aristocratic ladies, hot as Egypt! That lady looked as cool as the proverbial cucumber... She had on a two-piece white linen suit. Nobody but a die-in-the-wool Southerner would have on a white linen two-piece suit that day. Every hair was in place. That is society. There is still glory in it."

VOOGT: In what way is Brownsville different from the rest of the South?

R. MOSES: I think a lot of cities are typical of Brownsville because, in a lot of the small towns some of the original descendants are still here, the descendants of the original settlers are still right here in Brownsville. They have been steeped in tradition and that is what it all boils down to in my opinion. It is the Southern traditions that we grew up with, like gracious living, arrogance - a slight degree of arrogance, I think so. Aloofness.

VOOGT: Really?

R. MOSES: I think so. We're from the South! Have you not seen that? Sure, you have. It is here. They may be hiding it from you, but it is here. We're proud of our heritage and those who -, there are different categories, I'm not going to say class, that is not what I mean, categories of people. There are those who are descended from the ones who were in the Ku Klux Klan, then there are those who are descended from the ones who fought for the South in the Civil War, like Lynn Shaw. There are very few Klansmen descendants who I know about today. I know the one that was the - whatever they call them, head of the local one here in Brownsville in the sixties, but he doesn't live here now.

But, there's these degrees of Southernness in the people here - but it is still here, without knowing a lot of it.

And the cotton farmers, the farmers. They still like, those farmers, they like to take cruises after Christmas and do nice things after the crop is finished. I think that it all stems from the fact that their ancestors did not have to do anything. And when they get a chance not to do anything, they don't do anything.

Reese Moses' discussion of the South constitutes one of the most comprehensive descriptions of the region by an interviewee. Being a descendant of one of the early settlers, with Welsh-English roots, she focuses on her immediate surroundings, the Southern region, its history and culture, from the perspective of a white woman with an enquiring mind and a sense of history. Reese Moses has read most of what has ever been written about the South. Summing up the essence of Southernness, she said: "We feel it so strong. We are proud. I think proudness, pride is the basis of it all. Look at the homes we built in the mid 1800s. We flaunted it!"

When I remarked on the Civil War, which had destroyed many antebellum homes and much of the culture, and said that it was not all gone, she replied, "We have some, but we want it all, but we can't have it all anymore."

(xxiii) DR. JOHN L. REDDING (white)

A native of Lexington, Kentucky, John Redding served with the U.S. Army during World War II, and was involved in combat in the southern part of the Netherlands, where his unit shot down V2s, which the Germans aimed at the port of Antwerp. He obtained undergraduate and graduate degrees at the University of Kentucky, and graduate degrees at the University of Miami, Florida and Nova University. He was a history professor (1950-84), the last twenty years at Broward Community College, Fort Lauderdale, Florida. He has written special interest articles for the local newspaper since 1990.

On 20 March 1996 I visited John and Hazel Redding in their spacious home in Cromwell Square, Brownsville. John remembered that he had had some American veterans of the Vietnam War as well as some Vietnamese in his history classes in Florida. Some of the veterans shared their experiences with their professor and fellow students. "One, I remember, had been a helicopter pilot and some of his stories were hair-raising. Like they were trying to lift a little baby into the helicopter to rescue it and the Vietcong attacked and sliced the baby in half, before they could get the helicopter off the ground."

VOOGT: When did you first realize that Vietnam was becoming a problem?

REDDING: Harry Truman was the first to send advisers there. People always said that it was Kennedy, however, who did that. I was a little suspicious of it at that time. What really hit me between the eyes was in August of 1964 when we tried to say, well, Congress was told and they believed it - most of the senators and congressmen, that two of our destroyers had been hit in the Gulf of Tonkin; that was the excuse that Lyndon Baines Johnson gave for the Tonkin Gulf Resolution. But we have since learned that that was a lot of malarkey.

Kennedy was responsible for the disaster of the Bay of Pigs in April and was determined to make up for it by getting involved in Vietnam and be the savior of that area since he had lost out in Cuba.

He thought that Kennedy could be blamed "for a lot of this" (i.e. getting the U.S. involved in Vietnam), but that Johnson magnified the problem. And he went on to say that "Robert McNamara was one of the main villains in this thing along with McGeorge Bundy and some of Johnson's advisers." McNamara had tried to explain why he did not speak against the Vietnam War sooner than he did in his book *In Retrospect: The Tragedy and Lessons of Vietnam* (1995). He also believed that Nixon

could have ended the war sooner: "I think Johnson and Nixon both did not want to say that they were the first president to lose a war."

On the draft:

Dr. Redding remembered that some of his students in Florida were drafted. Usually they simply did not sign up for a class when they knew what was coming, so that they did not have to leave in the middle of the semester. I asked him about the people who did most of the fighting in Vietnam. What did he feel was the overall picture?

> REDDING: College students could get deferments; your boys just out of high school or who had not graduated from high school were the ones who were being selected to go. And so I think probably, you have more, many more boys from the lower economic strata of society than people like senator Graham from Texas, who was deferred. Newt Gingrich is another example. He was not over there. Of course, president Clinton was not over there because he was in college. I guess that was when he was a Rhodes scholar, so he was deferred. Of course, well, they were supposed to have drafted him, but he got out with a letter to the Draft Board. I think there were many more boys from the lower economic scale.
> VOOGT: Simply because they could not get a deferment?
> REDDING: Because they could not get deferments. They were not in college and that was not fair. That is almost as bad as in the Civil War [when] you could be exempted in the North by paying $300. A Union soldier paid $300. And you could get out.

On anti-war demonstrations:

"We had the Black Panther movement and there were Black Panther books and they had the streaker craze for a little while with kids running across the campus naked." The streakers were a minor cultural campus phenomenon, though, and had nothing to do with anti-Vietnam protests. The Black Panthers were very vocal and vehement, and at times got a little violent. But in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, they did not come inside the classrooms. They would simply pass out literature in the student lounge and in the cafeteria. Passing on to Kent State, John Redding said that the National Guard got too rambunctious.

> REDDING: That was a terrible thing. Of course, that was the prime episode that called attention to the stupidity of all of it. And then we heard of Jane Fonda going over to North Vietnam. Even though I

was against the Vietnam War, I thought that was too much. To go over and give aid and comfort to the enemy and fraternize with the Vietcong and the North Vietnamese government. I thought that was going much too far and a lot of America still don't have a lot of use for Jane Fonda.

On the South:

"I have always lived in the South," John Redding said. He qualified that statement by saying that he was from Kentucky, which he considered a border state. "But we do consider ourselves South, not North, and I would not want to live in the North, because, well, number one, I have always lived in the South and I think the people in the South are much friendlier than in the North. All you have to do is to take a little vacation up North somewhere and compare it with the service that you get in the South and the friendliness and the smiles and so forth." He felt that there just was a different atmosphere in the South. John's wife, Hazel, added that since the Civil War, Southerners have had "to hang in there together". John Redding argued that Southerners could trace their ancestry much further back as having lived in this country than in the North, where so many immigrant groups came in. In the South, including in Brownsville, there are people to this day who occupy the house that their great-grandparents lived in. In other words there often is a visible and at the same time emotional link in the South between the past and the present.

A lifelong professor of American history, Dr. Redding had a unique perspective on the development of U.S. involvement in Southeast Asia. Thus he knew that it was not Kennedy, but Harry Truman who sent the first American advisors into the region. Dr. Redding did not mince his words when he talked about McNamara, calling him one of the main villains. (In a later interview retired USAF colonel Russell Taliaferro used similar words). As a history professor during the Vietnam War, Dr. Redding was a witness to the effects of noisy student protests on campus, at the same time he noticed the effect of the draft on his classes in a reduced number of students. Dr. Redding arrived at the conclusion that the War in Vietnam was fought mainly by boys from the lower economic strata of society. In the Vietnam War as in the Civil War those that had might and means did not get to fight. Dr. Redding compared the men who were granted deferments during the Vietnam War with the Union soldiers in the Civil War who could be exempted by paying a sum of $ 300.

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(xxiv) NED ROOKS (white)

Ned Rooks was born on 20 August 1924. He married Eleanor Henson Knee in Ripley, Tennessee, in 1949. Rooks served on the County Court and worked at Smith Lumber Company in Brownsville. During World War II he flew with the Eighth Air Force, which was based at Kimbolton in England.

I talked to Ned and Eleanor Rooks on 10 August 1996. Their home on Rooks Drive was the first house built on that road when Brownsville expanded in a westerly direction along West Main Street.

> N. ROOKS: My people came to Haywood County in 1834, and I have the log cabin in the backyard that they built when they came to Haywood County. I was educated in Haywood County, went to World War II, flew with the 8th Air Force out of England, flew into your country [the Netherlands] some; I came home from World War II, started to work for Smith Lumber Company, Fox Smith's father. Worked for them for forty-four years, and was a builder. I built houses, developed subdivision land and things like that. Married Eleanor Knee in 1949. We have four children. One of our children lives in Brownsville, one in the Chicago area, one in Wichita, Kansas, and one in Memphis. As I said, I have always lived in Haywood County, other than the time that I spent in World War II. Presently retired, active in the Historical Society of Haywood County and president of it and have been for six years.

Eleanor Rooks taught school, starting in 1957, and worked in the public school system for eight years. Then, she believed this was in 1969, a private school was organized in Brownsville, the Tennessee Academy, where she taught elementary school until her politics got in the way and she retired. The school closed in 1986.

On the draft:

We discussed deferments during the Vietnam War. Ned Rooks mentioned student deferments: "Our son had a student deferment at first and then he surrendered himself to the draft and was not called. His number was high enough that he was not called on." For this reason the war in Southeast Asia had no special meaning for them.

On the Civil War:

We passed on to talk about the historical event in the past that made the

South what it is today. Eleanor Rooks said: "After the War of Northern Aggression - we did not have a Civil War because we had seceded and we were not part of the United States, and so we call it the War of Northern Aggression, they invaded us." She also accepted the designation the War Between the States for what is generally known as the Civil War. As we were talking she pointed out a portrait of general Lee on the wall. Many Southerners in fact had Lee's portrait on the walls of their homes and their offices.

> E. ROOKS: I don't know whether you noticed . . . the general who was in it, the sacrifice that was made by the South. The way the South rose again out of the ashes supposedly. What was fought in the South as you know, primarily, and farms were destroyed, people lost everything they had. Husbands were killed, fathers were killed or came home without their horse and that was the most necessary thing for a person to have. So, all of that. Now, after Ken Bryan published his documentary, whenever it was, what was the name of it? That generated a lot of interest in the War Between the States and the Sumpter Confederate -
> N. ROOKS: Well, they had a reunion in Richmond with the 100th Reunion of the War Between the States - the Southern Confederate government, and they had two thousand people there.

On the shift from Democrat to Republican in the South:

Ned Rooks said that the shift happened in the Goldwater-Johnson days, in 1964. Eleanor said that the Democratic party had become "this party of Washington must do it all for you from the cradle to the grave; we must have the taxes to do all of this and we will educate you, clothe you, feed you, take good care of your health, do all these things. And at the same time destroy the integrity of the individual."

On the South:

We passed on to talk about the values of the present-day South. Eleanor Rooks said, "Of course, we live in the Bible Belt and I think that is evidenced by the attendance and church membership and faith that is exhibited in the city, as in Memphis. Not to say that the crime is not there. It is. And it is a very difficult thing law enforcement and government are working on. But they do have what I'm talking about and the center of the black community is the church. That is the center of the social life, and it is where they are told how to vote. If you are running for office, you go to the black church or you get the ministers and they tell the folks how to vote. And so it is the center. Now, we have got so many churches in

Haywood County. Most of them are Baptist. There is a Church of Christ, that is a black church. And we are not integrated on the whole."

On Haywood County:

Haywood County, according to Ned, was the third largest cotton producing county east of the Mississippi River and had 125,000 acres of cotton.

On Camp Meetings:

Next to Tabernacle Camp there is Joyners Camp, and there are another two or three in West Tennessee. Eleanor Rooks mentioned that her grandparents went to several of their meetings. "Everybody was not kin to everybody else, but the people used to have 'Brush Arbor' committees, that was before I was born, even though I am old as dirt, but a Brush Arbor, you know what that would be." And Ned went on, "It is a tree - branches grow on top and they use the shade." Eleanor: "And they would have a protracted meeting. If you read the minutes, the church's, particularly rural churches, they talk about protracted meetings. Now, I just read the definition of that. I thought "protracted" meant they just went on forever, but I don't think that is what it meant. But, many people would be saved and so on; that is what it meant. And that is what protracted is."

On Genealogy:

After wandering over several other topics, Eleanor talked about her ancestors. "My ancestors, my mother's people were from Mississippi, my daddy's from Indiana, but my mother's people on one side they were French Huguenots, they came from Charleston, South Carolina." This was reminiscent of Peter Taylor's novel *A Summons To Memphis*, which lucidly explains the existing hierarchy in both the cities and the families of Tennessee.[162] It describes, amongst other things, the effect, especially on the mother in a lawyer's family, of moving from Nashville to Memphis. The mother is "the product of a rather formal, old society . . . and indirectly the product of the Richmond world *her* mother had come out of."[163] The mother compared the move from Nashville to Memphis with the "Cherokees' Trail of Tears". Memphis, in other words, was not an improvement. It was "a place of steamboats and cotton gins, of card playing and hotel society."[164] They were now in West Tennessee, which is more like the Deep South.[165] "Nashville was, by the Huntingdon-Huxley road, approximately two hundred twenty miles east of Memphis, two hundred twenty miles nearer to Richmond, to Charleston, to Savannah. But when Father spoke, one felt that it was more like two hundred twenty thousand miles."[166]

Ned Rooks showed me a picture on the wall with the Confederate flags over the top of it, of his grandfather, also called Ned Rooks. Eleanor said, "You see, that War Between the States was fought over states' rights and that is what we are still fighting for." The conversation drifted back to the ante-bellum South. "That genteel society", as Eleanor called it. She went on to say, "Of course, people had slaves. Now that is another thing. Of course, it was wrong for one person to own another. However, there was monetary loss, you see, when people possibly owned a whole lot of slaves."

(xxv) J.C.TURNER (black)

J.C. Turner was born on his grandfather's farm in Haywood County in 1921. He was one of Wash and Lena Franklin Turner's fifteen children and went to school in a primitive structure in the Koko community. "Students arrived early in the morning to start a fire with wood parents sent. If there was no wood, students went into nearby fields to cut corn stalks to burn in the stove. Boys took turns walking the half-mile to get water for the school. There were no windows, only shutters, but there was the occasional snake living in the log rafters, one of which caused a sensation one day by falling onto a student."[167] They went to school only five months a year. These were the months they were not needed in the cotton economy. In order to get to high school in Brownsville, he first rode a bus into town, but after services were discontinued he rented a room for $ 0.25 a week.

In the summer of 1942 he was inducted into the Army. J.C. Turner landed in Africa with general Patton as a staff sergeant with 250 Quartermaster Battalion, Company C of the Third Army. Later he sailed to Liverpool in the USS General Mann with 5,000 Italian POWs. In the wake of D-day he landed in Normandy, France on June 10, 1944. His outfit spent ten months in Paris, France, then moved to Stein, Germany, from where he returned to the United States in 1945. He married Berda Mae Taylor in 1946. They had ten children. In 1947 he began teaching farm training to veterans. In 1950 he went to college, driving 85 miles a day to Lane College in Jackson, Tennessee. He started teaching at Hopewell Elementary School in 1954, before transferring to Carver High School where he taught until 1967. In that year he was asked to transfer to Haywood High School so he could help the county comply with federal integration requirements. In effect J.C.Turner became the first black teacher in a formerly all-white school. He joined Good Hope Baptist Church when he was twelve. At the time of the interview he had been a deacon 42 years, a Sunday School teacher 45 years, and church clerk 33

years. He served the community as president of the South Hatchie Fire Department, and in many other capacities.

On civil rights:

Until 1959 blacks were not permitted to vote in Haywood County.

TURNER: That was when the drive went on for registration to vote. People came in from various parts of the country to try and help the blacks to get registered. What happened at the courthouse was that blacks were made to wait out in the sun for half a day or so, and this official slow-down policy would result in perhaps two blacks getting registered in half a day. And in the afternoon they would register another two people. It went on this type of way for several months until we got quite a few of them registered. So after we got registered, then, of course, if you were a registered person, it would take ten or fifteen minutes, but they would hesitate to register, mess around, keep one person up there for a long period of time. In '61, '62, [there was] a whole lot of trouble. It was not only difficult to vote, but they would interfere with you. We had people from Northern states. They would come down and bring money down. They brought food down and brought clothes, because at that time if you had registered, you know, there was a charter. If your name was on that charter, you were a charter member, all of you could not find a place hardly in Haywood County that you could live. Everybody, if you were black and had participated in that charter, they made you move off that farm.

VOOGT: Where did you move to?

TURNER: Well, a few black people had farms, so they made room for them; built what they called Tent City. And some of them that they made move, they moved into the tents. Quite a few. This was the group that had participated in the registration. It was hard.

VOOGT: How long did that go on?

TURNER: Well, it - the rough time, I guess, was about three or four years. They would not sell you anything on credit, and, of course, the black people had been accustomed to borrowing money from banks and other places to make their crops with. They refused - all the banks refused to let anyone whose name was on that charter, not just the banks, but all the lending agencies refused to let them have money to farm with. At that time all the black people more or less did farm work or janitor work.

On the Vietnam War:

What did J.C. Turner remember about the early stages of the Vietnam War? Because he had come out of World War II, after which the Korean War had quickly followed, they were aware, J.C. Turner said, all the time "that our boys started going". Family members were drafted, "just like I was drafted in World War II. They were drafted for Vietnam." Nephews and cousins were drafted, but none of his children were drafted into the service. He felt sure that America should not have been in Vietnam.

On the draft:

Did people talk a lot about deferments and how they could get them? J.C. Turner said, "No." There was of course a big rift between the white and the black communities where the draft and deferments were concerned. Deferments, after all, were tied in with education. Basically, the longer people could stay in school or college, the less chance there was that they could be drafted. And in those days, before integration, blacks in general were not in a position where they had ways and means to participate in advanced education. Therefore most young black men tended to be drafted.

During World War II the Army for Turner was a temporary window on the world beyond the poverty and hardship that went with being black and living in the segregated South. The first black teacher in what used to be an all-white high school, Turner played an important part in paving the way to a fully integrated school in Brownsville. Turner's memories of the Vietnam War era were of the hard times involved in establishing equal rights for the blacks of Brownsville and Haywood County rather than of the war. Yet he showed an awareness of the unequal number of especially young black men that was drafted into the Vietnam War.

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(xxvi) DIXON HOOD (white)

William Dixon Hood was born on 16 August 1922 in the Tibbs Community of Civil District 11 of Haywood County, Tennessee, to George Calvin Hood, son of William Anthony Hood and Sarah Ann Stevenson Hood, and Dora Lena Dixon Hood, daughter of Robert Moore Dixon and Mary "Kittle" Bradford Graves Dixon. In October 1951 Dixon Hood established an accounting office in Brownsville and operated until June 1973 when he was appointed county judge of Haywood County,

retiring August 31, 1986.[168] After his retirement he was involved in volunteer work: chairman of the local Hospital Board; work for the Chamber of Commerce, the hunting and fishing club, and the Rotary, as well as a lot of work for his church, First United Methodist.

In his home just off the courthouse square, he remembered his experiences in World War II in the South Pacific. He had spent as much time on a ship as a lot of Navy people had, going from island to island. He sailed all the way to Japan, which was where he was "when they dropped the atomic bomb". Dixon Hood was the first person I came across in West Tennessee to admit that he did not like history. He had not traced his family tree, but was aware that the Hoods moved into Haywood County many years ago. His passion was quail hunting. In fact, other people in Brownsville informed me that Dixon Hood was descended from John Bell Hood, the Confederate general.

On Brownsville, Tennessee:

> VOOGT: What makes Brownsville so special?
> HOOD: You know, I was asked that question some several times. Being chairman of the Board out at the hospital, we not always , but a lot of times, we're in the market for recruiting doctors, and families come into the community. And on several occasions I have been asked the question by a prospective resident, "What do you think makes Brownsville special?" And I say, "The people, the friendliness and sincerity of the people, I think. That makes Brownsville special." And this one lady in particular after they once moved here and had been here about a year, I asked her that question. And she said,"I think you're exactly right. It is the friendliness and sincerity of the people that want you to be a part of, not part from, but a part of the community."

On the South:

Hood thought that the South had become more industrialized. He also thought that people had less time now to do the things which they did in earlier days, when people could sit on the front porch or "on the porch and swing and visit". Due to increasing technology and industrialization the South was losing "some of that old Southern charm". He mentioned that in the past the Rotary had always had evening meetings, which implied time for fellowship. The Rotary now has lunch meetings, which means that members will always have to rush. A change from the old days is that Rotary members used to be all employers, whereas many members today are employees, who have one hour for lunch. The changing South in Dixon Hood's words: "Now we visit a lot of times by telephones, but

not in person." Asked why so many people in the South pursued a military career, he offered the following explanation:

> HOOD: I think perhaps the South was known as an agricultural community, and there just was not a whole lot of money to be made, and being in the military was something steady. The pay was not all that much at the time, but at least it was monthly. It was something and you had your food and housing provided, medical expense provided along with some spending money, and I know several people that accumulated a good bit of money by saving their pay with all the other items provided for them, and continued in the military until they retired. And then when they did retire, they were still young enough to have a regular job in the community.

On the Vietnam War:

Vietnam was a useless endeavor in Dixon Hood's opinion. He just thought that many people got killed over nothing. "We lost a lot of people and they lost a lot of people. I just don't think it ought to have been."

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(xxvii) DEITRA WADE (black)

Deitra Wade has been a guidance counselor at Haywood High School for many years. I first met her in that capacity in 1986.

On the Vietnam War:

She was in the ROTC in high school then and she remembered that the mood of the country was anti-military. "It did not make you want to wear your ROTC uniform." This was in Fort Worth, Texas.

> WADE: Because this was a war it seemed as though we were not allowed to win, it was just a piece of cake to go in and do what we need to do, where it was a lot of politics going on. And I think even when you mention it today, it makes people kind of sad and a little angry because of the politics going on. Today you have leaders who were leaders then, who have stated that they made mistakes.

She was referring to Robert McNamara's, *In Retrospect: The Tragedy and Lessons of Vietnam*, which had just come out. The war had affected her own personal life. Her husband was nineteen at the time, and she was not married until two years later. He was drafted. She said: "It was hot going on right then." Deitra Wade said that in those days the military were not so strict as to who would go into the service. But "right now everything is so high tech, they will not even talk to you unless you have a high school diploma." However, in the 1960s they had the draft, which, when her husband was drafted, went "with some type of lottery number. And my husband's number came up, and so he had to report. He had to report to the courthouse, where everybody went, and take the physical and all that. He was nineteen." She remembered how scared he was. The mood of the country was just not what you would like then. It was a terrible time. People protested in the streets; you had guys called "flower children". She saw all this on TV, as well as "what went on when I was in high school". In the end her husband failed his physical and consequently did not serve in Vietnam. Deitra Wade emphasized the very young age of the soldiers sent to Vietnam: the average age in Vietnam was nineteen, whereas in World War II this was "something like twenty-six, because they drafted all the way up to forty back then. And now this was a teenage war kind of thing."

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(xxviii) PATRICK H. MANN, JR. (white)

Patrick Henry Mann, Jr., was born on 25 February 1936 to Pat and Dorothy Mohon Mann. He grew up in the country six miles west of Brownsville but attended the city schools. While they were attending Vanderbilt University, he and Ann Elizabeth Rule married in December 1958. They both graduated from Vanderbilt in 1960. Patrick H. Mann started practicing law with Albert Carlton. He subsequently became co-owner of a real estate firm, and invested in farm land. The Manns have been actively involved in their church, First United Methodist Church, Brownsville, and in the educational system of Haywood County: Patrick served on the School Board from 1972 till 1988. Patrick and Ann live in a spacious home at the end of Creekwood, a cul-de-sac with a creek, shaded in summer by green foliage, on one side, and lined by beautiful homes on the other. A number of stately oak trees protect the house partly from view. From the windows in the drawing-room and the bedrooms there is a pretty view of the rolling cotton fields of Haywood County.

The interview with Patrick Mann was taped in the master bedroom. This to me seemed quite unique. The room possessed a sort of nineteenth-

century English atmosphere. It was beautifully decorated, and at the bottom end of the bed there was a comfortable settee and an armchair with a little sidetable. There was a TV set as well, while a door in the outside wall gave access to the swimming-pool outside.

Discussing the attitude in Haywood County to America's Foreign Wars, Patrick Mann said, "The people in this area sort of accepted it in World War II, and you have the Korean War, and you have the Vietnam War. And we just don't grow long hair and protest any of that. So it is a little different here in this area than in some other parts of the country." Did he mean just Brownsville? What he meant was the whole Southern region.

On anti-war demonstrations:

> VOOGT: Did students at Vanderbilt burn draft cards in protest against the war?
> MANN: Oh, yes. I remember very well, yes, when we went up there and while we were there. Vanderbilt is really a rather conservative school. To have the affluent type students they have to be, but it still has a conservative philosophy there, but during that era they did have - they had some of the burnings, and - it was not as widespread as it might have been at - you mentioned Kent State.
> VOOGT: Or some other universities up North?
> MANN: That is exactly right.

On the Vietnam War:

We dwelt on several other subjects, then moved to war literature, when I casually referred to America losing the Vietnam War.

> MANN: Maybe something about the Vietnam War is what we lost about it.
> VOOGT: Well, you lost the war.
> MANN: We lost the war. How is that? I don't think we did. We went over there trying to help the South Vietnamese. They left, before the war was over. They pulled out in '73 or '74.

It seemed to me that Patrick Mann was giving me his best lawyer's answer. He was answering the questions about the Vietnam War in the best possible legal manner. I referred to Richard Nixon, who declared a victory and pulled out. Patrick Mann's view of it was that the Americans pulled out when the war was not over yet. And that the war was between

North and South Vietnam. America, he said, went over to help the South Vietnamese, first by supplying material and then by sending troops. Then the Americans "got so fed up" with the Vietnam War that they decided to get out of it. "And we came out." He added, "How long did the war go on after that? For another year or two, did not it? And finally the South Vietnamese folded. How did they lose the war? We would not help the South Vietnamese to win it. We were, I guess you would say, in war. We were trying to help the South Vietnamese."

> VOOGT: I have heard that argument before, but the general feeling is, of course -
> MANN: The general feeling of the war was exactly what you say. It is the only war they ever lost, but I can't quite figure out when you - "did not win and losing" are different. You see, the way you lose a war is you throw your hands up and say, "I give up, ya'll have won. Tell me what I have got to do now."

Patrick Mann's memories of the anti-war demonstrations on the campus of Vanderbilt were at variance with those of other interviewees who had been students there. Mann remembered students burning draft cards, but also said that it was not a widespread phenomenon at Vanderbilt.

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(xxix) DR. RAY DIXON (white)

In 1854, twenty members of various families left the vicinity of Hillsborough, North Carolina, for the western section of Tennessee to escape the increases in land taxes in North Carolina. Several of these families found settlements in the area between Nutbush community and Tibbs community in District Eleven of Haywood County. Among these travelers were William A. Dixon, Nancy Ingram Dixon and their four sons and four daughters, who farmed the two hundred acres in their land grant. They were the ancestors of Arthur Ray Dixon.[169]

I first met Ray Dixon in August 1986 when he met me and my family at the airport in Memphis, Tennessee. We were colleagues for a year and over the years we have met often. Early in September 1995 we discussed the South, the Civil War, and the Vietnam War, in his study in his home on Lee Avenue. He lives in an interesting part of Brownsville, where the avenues have names like Stonewall and Lee: indication enough that this is the South.

On the draft:

Ray Dixon had a good inside view of what was going on at the Draft Board at the time of the Vietnam War. He was on the Board with two other members; the three of them replacing Dr. T.B. King, who used to run it. I asked him about the Draft Board. "The president of the Board was selected by the president of the Draft Board across the state. And that selection was Mr. Lloyd Patton. They asked to have a minority member and a member of each bracket of the draft age brackets. So, you see, since I had served in the military for six years of active duty and six years of reserve duty..." When asked if he would serve he had said "yes", not realizing at the time "that we were going to have so much controversy about the draft ...." This occurred in 1964. He then talked about the most commonly used deferment, the college deferment, which, he said, was a mistake, because it led to the Vietnam War being basically fought by poor people, agriculturally oriented workers, and construction workers.

DIXON: It was a mistake to excuse anybody with financial means or otherwise. Now, I have got a little note here to relate to you some cases where I ran into some problems in the draft, with coach Dwight Waller, who was the coach here about seven years ago. He just got out of college, Tennessee State. And he was an All American at Tennessee playing basketball. His name came up for the induction to be taken to the evaluation for the draft. He asked for a deferment so that he could continue on the degree he was working on and they granted him a one year, we call it. And during the course of that year, he made a try-out with the Denver Rockets, which was a professional basketball team in the NFL Association. They offered him a $ 490,000 bonus to sign. The problem was that they would not sign him until he had met his draft obligation or straightened that draft obligation out, because they did not want to put him on the team and have those dollars when they brought him back in a body bag. So, he came to the Draft Board again at the end of the year's time and I don't remember what the deferment was, but he was voted 2 to 1. I voted against sending him and the reason I did is because about two weeks before, we had had the son of a very wealthy political-oriented family of this community, previously everyone knew had donated $ 50,000 to the political campaign of the president. Well, this information did not have to be public, but at least, in the newspaper. So he supported their campaigns very heavily financially. His son came up for induction. Of course, he had no deferments. He was in college and he was failing three of the five courses he was taking. Obviously, he was in school for some reason other than studying. Well, anyway, we put him on the top of the induction list, because his number was very, very low. We do it by

birthday numbers. We draw a P.O. which has a date of the year on there and that is number one priority to go. He chose not to go and appeal his case, so on appeal you have got to have at least one member of the Board members to agree with you on the thing, before they would forward your chart up to the state for the state review. And this is the local Draft Board, and his file never came back to us until after the war was over.

VOOGT: Did it get lost?

DIXON: It got lost and the appeal floated, because the directive came from the president. He did not serve. He went ahead and stayed in college, I think, seven or eight years for the duration [of the war]. It showed up one day in the return mail. And his claim was rejected at that point, which meant that he had to go in, but -

VOOGT: The war was over.

DIXON: It was over and he was in the ROTC and was in as an officer so to speak. So, it was quite an upset for all of us, but we knew exactly when it went in two weeks before and it takes wealth to do things like that.

He went on to talk about the work of the Draft Board in general. Then said, "It became the poor man's war is what it became." Was that race related? He replied, "No, really. The whites that were poor, went too." He saw going to college as an avenue out. Students in college who were drafted could get a deferment. He said it was important to comprehend that the attitude of the people of Haywood County was the product of Bible Belt education, which was that if it was God's will that you would go, you would go.

DIXON: You were called according to a purpose. And that purpose was to carry out the function for our Army if you were sent a notice and your number came up - you would go. Now generally speaking, the more intellectual that you were the less [inclination] you had of leaning upon elevation and spirits and so forth. So at first when the war started, it was everybody's - You were expected. And as people began to oppose the war and people began to realize that it was becoming a poor man's war, a war of farmers, the construction worker, and the poor black in the rural South -. The turning point along this line, I think, was Mohammed Ali.

Most of the people in this area supported the war, I think, until we had a series of things that occurred. One of the things that affected us more than anything was that we had a young, very popular high school boy here, being a kind of an adventurer. And this first was an adventure to him. His name was Norman Lane. And Norman just up and quit teaching, volunteered, was sent to Vietnam

and promptly came back in a body bag. He was killed. And that was really a shock, because that was the first death in this area. Within a month, Stephen Land - I believe the boy's name was Land, was killed.[170] His mother runs a restaurant here.

After we had wandered over several other subjects, Ray Dixon talked about the beginning of American involvement in Vietnam. He had been among the first to be sent to Saigon. In the 1950s, during the final days of the Truman administration he had been stationed on the island of Guam, where he was a hospital coreman, an emergency field technician. He was taken to Osaka first, where he was given language training. He was then flown to Saigon. As he remembered it, "We went out in the fields, running rampart in Vietnam. The die was cast already, because we were out in the field and there was some hostility to us being there, trying to save those people's lives. And we got an opportunity to do some talking to some of the Vietnamese people while we were there. And the most common statement they made was, 'We have had one ruler after another for 2,000 years. It doesn't bother us who's here. The only thing important to us is the family.' And that was what it amounted to." The Americans stayed for fourteen weeks. There were nights that people would ride by and shoot. They were debriefed and "then the next thing we know, Kennedy is sending in military advisers".

DIXON: So, that was the beginning; I ran into Vietnam. I had never heard of it before and that was the only time I have ever been there. And so, when I get back over here and we hear these stories, I was not the least bit surprised if you remember the picture of the photographs of the South Vietnamese general putting the man down on his knees and shooting his brains out on television. Killing him. He had one down on his knees with his hands behind him and shot him in the back of the head and killed him. And that picture turned even people in Haywood County against the war. That is what started it. And then in 1968 we have the My Lai incident, which turned a few more.

I had the real vivid pictures every night we sat down at the table to eat and turned on the television and lo and behold they would show us this War in Vietnam today and Americans were just startled. I think one thing that just puts them back was this famous picture of the girl running out after the napalm bomb with her clothes burned off of her and everything. And the one that struck me more than anything else, that really made me stop, saying, "What kind of people have we become?", was this personnel carrier driving down the road with a dead Vietcong strung up behind him with a noose around his neck. They were dragging him after he was

dead - to show the Vietnamese that they were killing Vietcong for them and that really turned me off, so to speak.

I never really did oppose the war, because I think like most people in the South, we felt like we could not say to the rest of the world, "Hey, we're afraid of China."

It was indeed the pictures, the photographs of the Vietnam War that made a lasting impression on everyone who saw them. The effect they had was not limited to America, but was in fact universal. Indeed who does not know the pictures described by Ray Dixon? They had an enormous impact: not many people of the Vietnam generation looking at a Zippo lighter today, will be able to ignore the image of the soldier's outstretched arm holding one such lighter in his hand to set fire to the roof of a peasant hut in Vietnam.

The frustration felt in the South about the Johnson administration's handling of the war was tied in with the Southern code of honor. Many people felt that in effect America was showing its fear of China and possible Chinese intervention. Like other interviewees, Ray Dixon said, "We could have handled them."

Returning to the draft, he remarked, "I was going to tell you about some of the people I ran into that dealt with the war. The big problem was the college kids being deferred by the draft and those having to go. Well, when these folks started coming back - We had a young man named Danny Presley. I talked to him last night. [He mentioned his address and telephone number] And Danny was going through the rice paddies and stepped on a landmine. It exploded under him."

Due to his service on the Draft Board, Ray Dixon had been aware that there had been a preponderance of black men fighting in the Vietnam War at the time. Was it a racial war? He said that it had to be in the South, and explained, "because of the sheer numbers in the South. In our county we have been eighty percent black at times. It was not unknown there for eight blacks and two whites to go."

VOOGT: But if you look at the statistics. . . .

DIXON: It still looked like it was a black draft. It also might be interesting to note that from 1960 to 1970 we lost over 8,000 people, who moved out of this county. We had 28,000 people in 1960. In the 1970 census this dropped to 20,000 or thereabouts and it has continued to drop. I think one of the reasons was that so many of these young black males and their families lived in Illinois. There is one place up there that sent a newspaper reporter down here to see what we were doing to the black people to drive them up out of Haywood County. The solution was they were getting drafted. They fled the county to keep from getting drafted. And by

> the time we got their draft records up to that Board, they would be in Canada.

On Vietnam veterans:

We passed on to talk about the kind of welcome the Vietnam veterans received, and related this to the negative publicity about the war in the United States. He remarked, "Well, we did not win the war too. You celebrate a victory; you don't celebrate a defeat." And he quoted president Nixon, who said, "Hey, we got 'em out of Vietnam and we did not let it fall." And he added, "They let it fall." He was very bitter about the hard fate of veterans when they went back to work in the United States, saying, "And you come home and who are you going to work for is one of these protesters." They stayed home and got the college degree. No wonder these men are upset.

On the Vietnam War:

> DIXON: We were still winning as long as our soldiers were there. We controlled more land than the communists did. But when we pulled out, it took exactly forty-eight hours for that land to be gone and the communists to take over.

It was his genuine feeling that the U.S. were withdrawing from a winning position in Vietnam.

On Haywood County servicemen KIA:

Ray Dixon remembered that they had lost three men that he knew of in the county - "and these are just white men". Two blacks, whom he was not acquainted with, had also been killed. Their names were Taylor and Foster. "I did know these men. I did not know Marshall Canada [a white man]. And I knew Larry Land and I knew Norman Lane. These people really affected everybody that was here. We had a large number of outspoken World War II veterans here that kept support in this community a lot longer for the war than [the rest]."

On America's Foreign Wars and the Civil War:

The difference between the Foreign Wars that the United States were involved in and the Civil War, basically is one of numbers. During the Vietnam War eighteen Haywood Countians were killed, and during World

War II a total of fifty-one. About the Civil War Ray Dixon said, "We were just a small place here, but. . . my goodness, there is hardly anybody in this area that was not affected one way or another."

> VOOGT: So, in other words, the Civil War is a much greater thing?
> DIXON: Right. There is a great similarity [between the Civil War and the Vietnam War], because half of this county during the Civil War, especially the northern edges of this county and the northwest area, these people opposed the South's program of racial segregation and so forth. Yet at the same time there would be family against family right here in this county. And that would be the difference. In fact there is an analogy there, because a lot of the things that we think about that occurred during the Vietnam War certainly were problems during the Civil War from what I know about it.

On the South:

Dixon claimed that there was no animosity between the races prior to the beginning of the war. He argued that "in this area" it was a fact that most people valued slaves as pieces of property. This did not preclude beatings, but "nobody was going to cut a slave's foot off or kill someone in this area because they tried to flee or do something of that nature. Their ambition was to get them back and get them in the field for the work."

Dixon's perspective on the War in Vietnam is colored by his membership of the local Draft Board. In this position he came to realize that Vietnam became the poor man's war; those in a position to pull strings did so and stayed out of it. In Brownsville and Haywood County, more specifically, with its heavy black population, there was an overrepresentation of black draftees.

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(xxx) DR. RAY and KATHRYN DIXON (white)

Almost one year later, on 4 August 1996, I talked to Ray Dixon again, and to his wife Kathryn. This time we mainly discussed the South. Asked what made the South culturally different from the rest of the U.S., they both answered that it was the religious belief, the fact that the South was in the Bible Belt. Ray said that the second thing was "the English tradition

of the wealth of aristocracy that moved in here and got the land". He claimed that when people moved to the area they tried to create "another English monarchy, English aristocracy". Characteristics of the culture were the large farms, and the large number of servants. Another Southern characteristic is the love of hunting and fishing, which Ray Dixon accounted for as follows:

> DIXON: Well, I think that is kind of a throw-back from the old nineteenth century where basic food values were always - see, the South has suffered for several centuries, without any way of transportation. We had a railroad system that was demolished by the Civil War. But that was the only way to get around the South, was the railroad. Therefore it was impossible to get food in from other parts of the country. . . so, they went hunting. They learned to live off the land, they learned to support themselves.
> VOOGT: What makes Brownsville the typical Southern town now, when you come to it from other areas of the United States?
> DIXON: I don't think it is typically Southern. I think it is a typical Mississippi town. I think it is part of the Mississippi Delta and it is kind of - I would say it has a large black population and large Mississippi-type traditions. . . the attitude people have. . . it is just old farm agriculture, aristocracy. . . .
> K. DIXON: Yeah, because you know just about everybody. You can't go downtown without seeing somebody that you know before you get home. You go downtown in Memphis where you've lived all your life and you may spend all day long and not see anybody that you know.
> DIXON: People make it their business in this town to know other people.

The elements that distinguish the South, according to the Dixons, are the Bible Belt with its [Protestant Christian] Religion, its English heritage, and the love of hunting and fishing, which points to an attachment which Southerners have with their natural surroundings.

(xxxi) MARGARET EDDLEMAN (white)

In the summer of 1996 I talked about the Vietnam War to Margaret Eddleman, whose son Charles did a tour of duty in Vietnam. She remembered that his going there filled her with anxiety. She had a feeling that "they were going to shoot him when he got off the plane, because it sounded so terrible". She said that her son and another boy were the only two from Haywood County that had to go. Her son had just finished

college and she did not think that was fair. She said she "pulled every string" that she could pull. In effect this meant that she asked his former high school coach for help as well as Curtis Lowery, the postmaster, and several senators. But all to no avail. And she thought, "Lord, why can't I find somebody to help me?" His number had come up in the draft and that was it. She said that those were the worst two years of her life.

Ultimately her son stayed in Vietnam for fourteen months, because they had told him that if he stayed a little longer than his basic tour of duty, they would let him out when he got home. - Margaret Eddleman showed me some pictures she received from her son in Southeast Asia; they were dated 24 December 1967. There was a picture of Charles' jeep. She said that he traveled backwards and forwards from Phnom Penh to Saigon in it every day, a practice that was stopped after Tet. She said she also had a picture of general Westmoreland visiting her son's unit.

> VOOGT: Did a lot of young men from Brownsville go [to Vietnam]?
> EDDLEMAN: No, they did not. And that was why I was so bitter about it. That my son had to be caught up in it. But I guess mine was not any better than anybody else's to go, but I just felt like if there was some way I could get [him out of it]. . . Anyway, it took two years out of his life, just about, right out of college. And that is just time lost. And I think it really affected him. He doesn't talk about it. He never mentions it and he is not like the little boy that left.
> VOOGT: It was a bad experience.
> EDDLEMAN: It was. I said, "Charles, was there dope over there?" And he said, "Everywhere." And I said,"Well, I'm glad I taught you right from wrong before you went," because so many of them got on it... But he said, "No, I would not fool with it."

Margaret Eddleman said that her son was not a great letter writer. So they communicated by sending tapes back and forth. Every week she would do a tape and tell him what was going on in his hometown. And in turn he would talk on tape to her. I asked her whether she had saved the tapes. She replied that they got lost when she moved. Charles had been asked to share his experiences with the MYF. His mother said that he had concluded his talk by saying that the war could have been ended any day they wanted to. "They kept it going and he said there was never any way to ever end it because the French had been over there all those years and they could not do it."

She went on to say that people in West Tennessee did not know that the war was not necessary at that time. "And afterward there was a lot of people that were protecting it and all that, but we found out later that it was a political thing, you know . . . Here we just decided that it was a

political thing and they could have stopped it. . . and nobody won anything. . . ." I asked her whether Vietnam was very much on people's minds. She replied, "Unless they had some people over there. I can remember Larry Banks and our own senator's son, and that is about the only things, there was more that maybe I did not know."

In several other interviews president Johnson's name had come up in conversation and I had been struck by the negative feelings about him. I therefore asked this nice lady what she thought of him. She said, "We just thought Johnson was a - he did all this, he did it. And we were kinda upset with him." But our talk ended in a humorous way. She was explaining the family relations of some people known to my family, and then she suddenly said, "Somebody said that everybody in Brownsville is kin to somebody else, you better be careful what you say! There are a lot of kin people."

Margaret, like other interviewees from the area, looked at the Vietnam War chiefly from the point of view of the draft, which is how the war came to affect her life. The interview with her reveals that those who did not have might and means could not avoid the draft and, consequently, had to go to Vietnam. The interview also confirms the immense unpopularity of president Johnson.

(xxxii) BEN L. WILEY (black)

On a beautiful, sunny day I talked to father and son, Ben L. Wiley and Jere Blue Wiley, in Harvey Livingstone and Minnie Walden's smart-looking store, the erstwhile post office, on the courthouse square in Brownsville. The date was 6 August 1996 and we sat down around a beautiful shiny cherrywood table, polished to a high gloss by one of the Wileys. The store has always been frequented by future brides and their friends and family to select wedding gifts.

During World War II Ben Wiley served in North Africa where he was a quartermaster. He worked at HQ and chauffeured the company commander. His unit then moved to Italy and after that to France, where he was stationed at Marseilles. In 1945 he went straight to Mannheim, Germany.

Ben Wiley said his oldest son served in Vietnam for a year. He remembered his son was wounded in the knee and was lying wounded for twelve hours before anybody came to his aid.

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(xxxiii) JERE BLUE WILEY (black)

Jere Blue Wiley is Ben L. Wiley's son. Seated next to his father at Harvey Livingston's he told me:

> I went into the service on 21 February 1974, and I was discharged on 6 May 1977. I was given credit for on paper being a Vietnam veteran, because the war had not officially ended upon my entry. My feeling at the time was to go and volunteer, because I had avoided the draft, not purposely, but I went in school and I found out school was not for me, so I went working in a factory - that was not for me. So the next thing, the last alternative I had was to apply for duty in the military.
>
> I went to all four branches; I went under the illusion that the Army was the best, because they gave me $2,500 at the time of my entry after four months of duty.
>
> I volunteered for combat action so that qualified me for the $2,500; I actually received $2,000 after four months in the service. And I was supposed to stay four years, which I only did three years, two months, eleven days. . .
>
> Unfortunately, I received other than honorable discharge, which three years later I went to the Pentagon and before a Board of Officers' Review, I had it upraised to an honorable discharge. And I have all my benefits for - the only thing I'm not allowed to do is be buried in Arlington National Cemetery. . .

Jere Wiley went on to say that he was self-employed and that he had also "accepted a call into the ministry". He passed on to talk about his feelings about the Vietnam War and said his brother as well as several of his friends had been in Vietnam. Jere said he was "in full support of the war".

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(xxxiv) DAVID HOOPER, SR. (white)

David Hooper's family on his mother's side came from North Carolina. He was not sure where his father's family were from originally. David Hooper has been in the oil business, the delivery of petroleum products to farmers and to convenience stores for forty years. He has lived in Haywood County all his life. He has been actively involved in his church, First United Methodist Church, Brownsville, for a great many years.

When we talked in his office on 7 August 1996, he said he would be 62 the following week.

I asked him what he could remember of the 1960s. Did he remember what it was like to live in Brownsville during the Vietnam War period? He replied, "Well, we saw so much on television that, you know, the people revolted and all the commotion that was going on in other cities. But as far as Brownsville is concerned, we did not have any uprising of that sort here in the sixties. Now, I think in the seventies we did have some racial tension, but not any tension caused by the Vietnam War."

On civil rights:

David Hooper remembered that Dr. Martin Luther King came to Memphis. He happened to be in Memphis the night that Dr. King was shot. Hooper attended a meeting in that part of town, not far from it. He said, "And as I was sitting there, we were about to have our meal and they came in and told me that I had to leave. I said, 'What do you mean?' And they said, well, they had killed Martin Luther King about three or four blocks from the place where we were and they said, 'You're going to have to get up and leave and go home.' They said the police had encircled all this area and 'they probably will let you out, but they will not let you stay.'"

D. HOOPER: There was a lot of uprising and unrest in the city of Memphis at the time and we had a place close to the river downtown, close to the Mississippi River.
VOOGT: This unrest was more in Memphis than in Brownsville?
D. HOOPER: Oh, yes. We had some racial strife, but we always have had a good relationship with the black people in our town.

On the Vietnam War:

David Hooper was in the National Guard for fourteen years. Most of the time that he was in the National Guard, the Korean conflict was going on, but his unit was not called out, although several units were called out in Tennessee for the Korean conflict. He said he was out of the Guard when the first part of the Vietnam conflict was taking place. He remembered they had several people in their church that were part of the Vietnam War. He remembered that Larry Banks went there. He said, "They went to Vietnam and we were concerned along that line; the people that we knew that were involved in the Vietnam War, but as far as our life, unrest and uprising in our town, forget it. We did not have that."

On U.S. presidents and the Vietnam War:

D. HOOPER: Lyndon Johnson took over after Kennedy, and he escalated the war. I never was in favor of him. I did not think he was a good president. I think he caused a lot of problems in the South, especially during his presidency. And he was a Texan and a Southerner. He was still - you know the part about the Great Society, when people are not responsible for working and we still suffer from that. Sort of mentality that people can make their living from the government and not having to work and being responsible.
VOOGT: Did he surprise you as a Southerner, could you believe it was coming from him?
D. HOOPER: It did surprise me, but seeing him as a Southerner and the power that he had over the legislative process in this country. I was not surprised that he could get things passed through Congress, because he had such... power.
VOOGT: Do you think Kennedy would not have got the U.S. involved in Vietnam?
D. HOOPER: Kennedy would not have escalated the war. He would have tried to find some solution - they did not seem to know who we were fighting or what purpose we were fighting for. I mean, did not seem there was going to be any solution... so I think he would have done like Nixon did, just bring it to an end.
VOOGT: Was the feeling at the time here that Lyndon Johnson personally was responsible or did you feel that other politicians were?
D. HOOPER: Yes, Lyndon Johnson and the politicians were responsible.

Asked to clarify the shift from Democrat to Republican in the South, David Hooper argued that this went back to taxes and the liberal view that was seen in the country. "The Republicans have changed that view from the liberal standpoint to conservative, thus gaining momentum." In the South people who used to vote Democrat, moved away from the party during Johnson's presidency.

(xxxv - xxxix) ON LT. NORMAN LANE, JR., KIA

Interviews taped at Tabernacle Camp, Haywood County, August 1996

The interviews in this section were taped at Tabernacle Camp with a number of people who used to be with lt. Lane at the camp in the month of August of every year when he was still alive. Members of the Taylor

family, whose roots go back to Haywood County, still flock to the camp from all over the United States every summer.

Tabernacle Camp was built in a wooded area next to Tabernacle United Methodist Church. One of the first actions taken by Richard Taylor when he pioneered in the Tabernacle community in early 1826 was to build a church which he called New Hope. Made of logs, it stood in the grove of his home. Almost upon completion, an addition was made so that slaves might worship with the Taylor family at Sunday and midweek services. The cemetery was begun at its current site with the death of Nancy, the first wife of Richard, on 3 August 1829. Today the graveyard encompasses about two acres, where neighbors and kinfolks are buried.[171]

The present church building was constructed in 1847. It was extensively remodeled and bricked in 1922 and enlarged again in 1988.[172] Taylor kinfolks from all over the United States and Canada and foreign countries attend the annual camp meeting held in August. The Kinfolks Camp Meeting is a survivor of the protracted camp revivals that swept rural America during the early 1800s. For over 160 years, it has been held every summer in war and peace. Today there are over forty camphouses, most with kitchens.

(xxxv) DR. AL CLAIBORNE (white)

Today Al Claiborne, who was born in 1952, lives in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. He grew up in Brownsville, Tennessee. Al and Norman, Jr., were first cousins. Seated on a wooden bench outside the camphouse of Mrs. Betsy Battle, Norman Lane, Jr.'s mother, Al Claiborne told me about his cousin who had been killed in Vietnam. He remembered a photograph where he was three or four years old.

AL CLAIBORNE: There is a photograph in my family album of me in a little Radio Flyer wagon. Norman, Jr., of course, being ten or twelve years older than me, pulling me through the campground. Of course, you would come out here every summer and, you know, he was older than I was, so you had kind of a notion of him, but I do remember, because he did have a big influence on me somehow. Because he had gone to Vanderbilt University and my mother had gone there. And that is where eventually I went, and so, somehow, I felt that the fact that he had been several years before I went was a factor. But the other thing that I definitely remember, because I was so close to uncle Marion and aunt Lib, one thing I do definitely remember that gets more into the timeframe of Norman's death, was the Thanksgiving of 1967. [Here Al Claiborne was overcome with emotion] We would always have Thanksgiving dinner, my family, uncle Marion and aunt Lib. And I remember, I was fifteen

years old, and Norman, Jr., had just gone over to Vietnam, and I remember uncle Marion looking at the television and saying that he - ; and then I remember later, he was much older than I, we did not correspond or anything like that, but I remember when he died, I remember exactly, we were juniors in high school, and it was in the spring, and we were having these silly elections for class officers and all that, and so we were at someone's house getting posters and stuff like that ready. We were sixteen years old and somebody made a sort of an indirect reference to his death and that was the first news I had even heard of - and I remember I turned to someone and I asked them, I said, "Is Norman, Jr., dead?" And they told me that he was. I remember coming back; a friend of mine and I drove back to my cousin's house and there were uncle Marion and aunt Lib and my mother and father were just about to go get them.

And later that year, most of my experiences with Norman were really through my uncle Marion, later that year, if you look in the second edition of *The Taylors of Tabernacle*, later that year, that fall, I guess it was, we were in an English class in high school. And they asked us each to write a story about, or an essay about someone that we liked or admired or whatever. And I picked my uncle Marion as a subject for whatever reason.

That was done when I was sixteen years old. Then, actually a copy of that got included in the second edition of *The Taylors of Tabernacle*, because, I think, well maybe I did a halfway decent job of reflecting on him. But also it very definitely brought home my feelings about him as a 16-year-old, and personal losses he had suffered, not only with Norman, but with his own son. But, you know, you think about it just being younger, and everybody in my age bracket, I mean, we were in an age where, probably you know, you would have to really work very hard to even be in the military at the time of the Vietnam thing before it was actually over. Or anything even more seriously involved than that. And this was a pretty small town and I don't think the average high school student and perhaps even the average citizen, *it was not the most burning issue of the sixties here locally* [my emphasis]. But Norman, Jr., was like, for whatever loss of contact or experience that I had from my age or who I was with, he was my one direct personal contact with that experience.

I have thought about it a lot and I have read avidly books about the Vietnam experience and things of that nature, because of him. And I have even, six or seven years ago I used to tell Terry [Mrs. Claiborne] occasionally that some day I would sit down and write a book about Norman, Jr. or something like that.

Norman Lane was twenty-six or twenty-seven years old when he was killed. Involuntarily connecting the Vietnam War and the Second World

War, Claiborne added: "He was born right before Pearl Harbor." Several other people were sitting around us and at that point a woman [unidentified, but possibly Mrs. Lorraine Thornton, one of the authors of *The Taylors of Tabernacle*] said, "May I interject something?" And this was what she said: "We were watching the 6 o'clock news and they showed a scene in Vietnam, and we saw it, aunt Lib and uncle Marion saw it, and a few other people saw it. And I ran to the phone and I said, 'That was Norman, Jr. Do you remember that? Did you see it? And I'm sure it was.'"

Al Claiborne resumed, "That was in '68 and I remember where I was when I heard." This was an indication of the magnitude of this death. It is a basic, universal fact of human psychology that in the case of a tragic, personal loss, all our senses are intensely focused to register even the minutest detail which is then stored in our memory for as long as we live. Thus many people have very precise memories of where they were and what they were doing when they heard that John F. Kennedy was dead.

"I remember the next morning," Al Claiborne said. "It was a Sunday. I remember myself and one of my best friends out here, who is my age; his name is Richard Carlson. He might not remember that much about Norman anymore than I would. But we would sit on the front row at church and I remember the emotions; but I would think about it and I would think about Norman, and think about him dying."

We then talked about Hollywood movies about the Vietnam War. Al Claiborne was impressed by *The Deerhunter* (1978) and *Apocalypse Now* (1979). Aloud, he wondered why it had taken "the film industry or Hollywood or whoever" so long to produce Vietnam War movies. It is true that only one Vietnam War movie came from the Hollywood studios during the conflict. It is also true that it was not a good movie; it was no more than a transformed cowboy movie, starring John Wayne (*The Green Berets*, 1968). Al Claiborne thought that *Apocalypse Now* was a strange film in many ways. The films that lingered in his mind came out in 1987, especially *Full Metal Jacket*, because it was "just absolutely the most brilliant portrayal of what it must have been like". Moreover, it actually was about a Marine unit during the Tet offensive. "Norman, Jr., was killed, depending on how you classify the Tet offensive, in the latter stage of that." This was in late March; the Tet offensive started around late January. "And he was in the Marines," said Al Claiborne. "*Platoon* came out the same year." Neil Sheehan's *A Bright Shining Lie* was the definitive book about the whole thing. Al Claiborne's closing remarks were about Robert McNamara's book, *In Retrospect*. He thought that what was so "disgusting" about it was that McNamara got out of the Pentagon in 1968, and so the attitude was "we got in there and we got it started, but let's just walk away now, just let it take care of itself". But it was not only that, but also for twenty-five years after he had left the Pentagon, "he had specifically refused ever any interviews, any quotes for any newspaper, anything".

(xxxvi) LORRAINE REGEN THORNTON (white)

L.R. THORNTON: One year at camp meeting time, the weather was very bad and it seemed that on just about every tree there was some kind of shelf mushroom and the ground was just covered with different kinds of mushrooms. Well, Norman, he had all the children on the campground; they were so excited about the mushrooms that they were gathering them for him and he would spread them on benches out in front of the house. So by the end of the week we had the most fabulous collection of mushrooms that has ever been seen, and all because of Norman's interest in the mushroom. Then at night he would take all the children and young people up on the ballfield and they would spread out blankets and he would teach them about the constellations. He had one of the most inquisitive minds that I have ever seen. He did not want to miss anything of God's creations, or any of the people of God's creation. He was just that interested and fascinated by life itself, and I just wanted to put that bit in.

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(xxxvii) SALLY THORNTON CAVIN (white)

Sally Thornton Cavin shared her last memory of Norman Lane with me.

S.T. CAVIN: Norman was a very sweet young man. He was interested in his kinfolks, always. The last thing I remember about him: one day Norman knocked on the door. And we were so happy to see him, and he ate dinner with us and we just visited a long time, and he said, "You know, I'm getting ready to go to Vietnam, and I want to visit all the people I know." And that meant so much to us. I was nine years older than him, so I did not know him personally, but I knew him as a wonderful person that we all were very proud of. We were just horrified - so sad, and we just find it hard to describe. But I want him to be remembered as someone who really loved his family.

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(xxxviii) LYNN THORNTON MANN (white)

Lynn Thornton Mann was raised in Brownsville, and lives in Jackson, Tennessee. She lived in Nashville when Norman lived in Brownsville. They were camp meeting kids and Norman wrote her letters when she lived in Vancouver and when he lived in the Bronx. And when he came to Vanderbilt they became even closer friends. They took some courses together; a big history course, a lecture course with two hundred people, and they sat beside each other. "I don't think we learned a lot of history, but we had a grand time." After he went to Vietnam he wrote her "very personal, lovely letters." She said, "He sent me the tongue of a butterfly so I could see how beautiful and big it was."

She remembered sending him for Christmas "a bell that you pull and it plays a little song and a book of Christmas carols, because he wanted to lead the men in Christmas carols and he was not positive that he remembered all of the words". He wrote her a letter to tell her how much he had enjoyed that. And also that he was happy with a jar of peanut butter, which he put insect spray on and lit to make a candle.

(xxxix) BETSY LANE BATTLE (white)

Betsy Lane Battle was born 1 July 1919 in Haywood County, Tennessee. She spent most of her life in Colorado, California, British Columbia, Canada, New York, and Florida. She has recently returned to Brownsville, as she put it in a letter, mailed 27 August 1998 "to spend the remaining years of my life [here]". She is the mother of Norman E. Lane, Jr. I talked to her when I visited Tabernacle Camp on 7 August 1996. Betsy Battle, who was living in Appalachicola, Florida at that time, said, "I was born right up the hill here from the campground." She talked about the history of Tabernacle Camp, and said that the descendants of Kyle Taylor had their own plots in the cemetery. Because she married into the Lane family, her plot is on the back side, where the Lanes are buried. She said, "Then my second marriage was Battle and they are in another section. I married my cousin. And he's buried with his first wife and his mother and daddy. And I will be buried by my husband and my son that was killed in Vietnam."

> BETSY BATTLE: Now when Norman was killed in Vietnam, we were told we could open the casket. And he was -, he had been shot; shrapnel had killed him instantly they thought. And it was obvious that his face had been disfigured, but they had put it back and it was -, you could tell it had been him. His mouth would have been crooked, but it was not.

And he had just finished Vanderbilt Law School when he volunteered for the Marines, because he had been indoctrinated from the day he was born by my daddy telling him that his uncle had given his life for this country and it was his obligation to do the same thing, to go to service.

My brother was killed in World War II. He was on a B-24 or whatever they had in that day. And my son was lieutenant in the Marines, and I guess he was killed in Da Nang, but he, of course, had gone to Quantico because he went in with - he was an officer. And shortly after he got to Vietnam, was killed. And months later they brought the body home.

And if you really want to know, he arrived, his body arrived in Memphis the day Martin Luther King was killed. And so everything in Memphis was put on curfew and we did not know for days when we could have the service.

Marines were curfewed in Memphis. But it is just uncanny that my only brother - my mother had two children - and her only son was killed in the Second World War and then she transferred all her love to my own child, her grandchild - and he was killed in service. They were the only two -

VOOGT: I heard your son was a teacher at the high school.

BETSY BATTLE: He did one year. What happened was, he had finished law school and the Marines said they did not have space for him at Quantico for one year, so he came to Brownsville to stay with my mother and daddy. And while he was here visiting them, they begged him to come to the high school and teach French and freshman English.

She then talked about the camp. It was the only camp in the world that was strictly family; others were linked to church denominations. In parting I mentioned to her that Martha Hooper had told me that during the war, school children wrote letters to her son in Vietnam. When I asked her if I could have copies, she said, "Well, I'll tell you what happened - turn it off!"

The interviews taped at Tabernacle Camp in the late summer of 1996 indicate the impact of the death in Vietnam of lt. Norman Lane, Jr. on his mother and other relations. At the same time my visit to the camp was a unique opportunity to see an aspect of Southern culture that reached back to the days of the first settlers.

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(xl) MILDRED RUSSELL (white)

Mildred Sturdivant Reid was born in Brownsville on March 8, 1919. Her parents were George Chapman Reid and Mildred Coleman Sturdivant Reid. She married Thomas Duckworth Russell, Jr., on October 23, 1938. She is the mother of Dr. Thomas D. Russell III.

We wandered over several subjects, talking about Tabernacle camp mainly. I asked her what she could remember about the Vietnam War and how it had affected Brownsville. She replied, "Well, of course, we were all in shock. We were so concerned about our people and who had to go. All families were afraid that their young boys would have to go to the service. It made a terrible impact on Brownsville. And we all had to sacrifice. Of course, we lost young people. And then some men, as always, found that they could claim - well, they had to be there to take care of the farm and there was quite a bit of envy there or they just did not appreciate these men that got out of serving." I then asked her whether the farming deferment was only a temporary measure.

M. RUSSELL: That is correct. But they were not - , they did not serve their time and there's families, some of them - , but they looked down on them, but sort of felt that if their people had to go to the service, then it should be -, but there has never been a fair way to treat all people. I mean, if you have a ruling, it doesn't always protect -.

"What makes Brownsville or Tennessee, South today?" I asked her.

M. RUSSELL: We have people move even from Memphis to Brownsville, and they say that they have never felt anything to equal the love that people have in Brownsville. Times have changed considerably, because at one time we were privileged to have big, black women in the homes to care for our needs; cooking, and taking care of our families and some people possibly took advantage of them, but the big families loved them and treated them, just like they were family members. We had a cook for thirty-two years and she stayed with us and she developed cancer, but Tommy, my son, said she reared him. She died recently and he gave a testimony at the church, tried to, but he cried and see, I took over. I did not do much better. Because she was just like a member of the family. Big deal. And we do not have that now. And the change is good, but it has changed our living.

What the War in Vietnam suggested to Mildred Russell was the problem of the draft, or its basic unfairness rather, when some could claim deferments, while others could not.

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ON RICHARD KEITH JOHNSTON, KIA

(xli) SUSAN PETTIGREW (white)

In September 1995 I had sent a letter to the editor of the *Brownsville States-Graphic*, asking the people of Brownsville and Haywood County to write to me if they had any written information about the Vietnam War. Susan sent me a letter, telling me about her brother who had been killed in Vietnam.

PETTIGREW: It was 17 August 1970 and I was out of town on vacation with Jack and his family and called home to check in and my parents told me they had somebody from the Army had showed up where they worked to inform them of my brother being killed. And so I came home and it was like a week before his body came home and my parents were real protective about the information; I had a younger sister. She's six years younger than I am.

Rick was the oldest and according to my parents, the Army was very vague about how the accident happened. Rick was a gunner on a helicopter and they were flying over the Cambodian border early in the morning in the fog and the helicopter hit something and crashed, and all those on board were killed.

And the Army said that if my parents wanted to know anything else, they could contact some of the families of the other people. It was real strange. Of course, they did not really pursue it at the time because we hadn't buried him yet. And it all seemed like a dream. Of course, I'm sure that is no different from any other death in a family, but it was kind of an extended waiting for him to come home, and his body finally came. And we had a memorial service at the Presbyterian church. My parents wanted to bury him in Illinois, because we had moved to Brownsville in 1966, and we had always lived in Illinois up until that point. So we had a memorial service at the Presbyterian church and then, we went to Morse, Illinois, and buried him there. And I remember the Army sent a person to be with us the entire time. This guy came. I don't remember what his

name was.

She went on to say that what grieved her parents very much to the present day was that they had never received her brother's Purple Heart decoration. She had recently taken some action on this, and based on her experience, she said that the red tape was unbelievable. "I called some place in St. Louis and the lady there said she just did not know. They had this real backlog and there were file cabinets down at the base and there were thousands and thousands of requests and they could not find my father's request. I needed to write to so and so. It was just another matter for her." She then quoted from a letter she had received from the Army in 1993, saying, "Currently, we have a backlog of ten thousand separate award requests. Please understand that your request will be handled in turn and could take as long as one year to be completed."

Susan passed on to a conversation about the time when her brother had volunteered. After graduating from high school, he did one semester at U.T. Martin. She said, "he enlisted". Her brother had been a big hunter, fisherman, and he was an outdoor type of person. And she said, "He was not drafted, but he enlisted, and he was kind of excited about it." She remembered the last time she ever saw him, he was excited about it.

On the Vietnam War:

They saw the news about the Vietnam War at home, but it was not a big debated issue in their house. They knew that when her brother was going, the news was not very good, but she did not think anybody in Brownsville understood how bad it was. Commenting on the Vietnam War movies she had seen, she said, "I do not know how much to believe of the movies I have seen and that kind of thing." One of the Hollywood movies she had seen was *Platoon*. She said, "Most of the movies portray the guys who went over there and fought in Vietnam coming back and being chastised and ostracized for having fought. And this has been an issue I have taken up with this guy in Arkansas, because he was a Marine over there." I asked her about the Marine. His name was Bill Rogers. "He was wounded severely in Vietnam and sent back, but that was his life. That is all he talks about. But he also claims that the people of America did not welcome back the soldiers and I don't know how true that really was." Bill Rogers was a friend of the man she was dating, who was from Arkansas. She said, "They are both rice farmers over there. And when I met Bill, he started talking about Vietnam and I told him that my brother had been in Vietnam." She also said that she and Bill were like blood-brothers now.

On Vietnam veterans:

How were the veterans welcomed home? Susan explained that people did not make "a big to-do" about it, but there was not any "booing and

hissing" either. "It was just kinda like they were glad they made it home."

Very nearly a quarter of a century after the end of America's involvement in Southeast Asia, the Vietnam War still affected Susan and her parents. Their efforts to get a Purple Heart decoration have been frustrated by red tape so far (summer 2000). The reason why Rick Johnston's helicopter crashed has remained a mystery also. Perhaps the crash came as a result of the helicopter's proximity to the Cambodian border, which would have violated official U.S. policy.

II. THE VIETNAM VETERANS

The local Vietnam veterans served with all the Armed Forces, the U.S. Army, the U.S. Navy, and the U.S. Air Force.

(xlii) TOM SILVIA (white)

On 14 December 1995 I talked to Tom Silvia in his office at Haywood High School in Brownsville, Tennessee. I had first made his acquaintance in 1986 when he taught Mathematics; in 1995 he taught American History and American Government.

VOOGT: I remember when I was here nine years ago your telling me that you were flying in a B-52 in Vietnam.
SILVIA: That is correct.
VOOGT: Were you drafted?
SILVIA: No, I enlisted in the Air Force in 1954, I believe.

Four years later, instead of going back to college, to Georgia Tech, Tom Silvia decided to go to Aviation Cadets, which was an officer training program at that time. He did that and went to Navigation School at the same time, as well as going through electronics training. When he got out after two years, he went to B-52s and was stationed in South Dakota. After four years he met his wife and got married. In 1968 his crew volunteered to go bomb Vietnam, "because," he said, "we did not want to miss the war". They had been training for war for a very long time and they thought it would be over "pretty quick".

VOOGT: You still thought that in '68.
SILVIA: Well, we could have finished it very quickly if they had let us. The myth is the United States could not win. The reality is we could have killed everyone in North Vietnam and then there would have been no longer any war.
VOOGT: But how?
SILVIA: Bombing them.
VOOGT: This is what you were doing.
SILVIA: We were not bombing targets, we were bombing jungle. The target selection was made not by us, but by staff, higher headquarters, etc. And they did not want to bomb North Vietnam, which was the enemy! Instead we bombed South Vietnam.
VOOGT: Are you talking about higher headquarters in Saigon or in

the Pentagon?

SILVIA: Higher up, I'm not sure where, but we did most of the bombing in South Vietnam. The enemy was North Vietnam. We would bomb the Ho Chi Minh trail and that was a jungle area with a small trail. And they [the Vietcong] came south two by two, three by three, whatever.

VOOGT: Did you know the Cu Chi tunnels at the time?

SILVIA: We knew there were tunnels and we were not very interested in that. What we were interested in doing was going north and destroying the North Vietnamese.

VOOGT: North of the DMZ?

SILVIA: North of the DMZ. Which we finally got to do over Christmas of 1972, in what we call the 11-day war. It lasted eleven days. We bombed North Vietnam into oblivion.

VOOGT: What did you bomb?

SILVIA: We bombed railroad yards, missile sites, airfields, military targets, and storage points. And when we were done in eleven days, they had nothing left to make war with.

VOOGT: What about the port of Haiphong, did you bomb that?

SILVIA: Well, I did not bomb Haiphong, but I believe that other units did bomb it. I bombed Hanoi, railroad routes in Hanoi and I bombed very close to China, about ten miles from China, the border. That was interesting because -

VOOGT: They could have hit you?

SILVIA: Yeah. They could have sent fighters. They did not. They did not get into it. But we made, I think, SAC [Strategic Air Command] made something like 740 plus bombing raids with B-52s into North Vietnam and we lost something in the order of 17 airplanes shot down and another 10 that were damaged so much they could not fly. So our loss rate was something like 3%, which was very very low.

VOOGT: Why did the eleven-day period of bombing stop when it did?

SILVIA: If I have my history correct, the North Vietnamese decided then to go back to the peace table in Paris, and we stopped bombing. And then within a matter of a couple of months or so they turned loose the prisoners that they had in North Vietnam and we picked them up in Hanoi, I believe.

In my mind, at least, it was the pressure of the 11-day bombing by SAC, because we had the ability at the end of that eleven days to fly anywhere in Vietnam with total impunity. They could do nothing. They had no anti-aircraft sites left virtually. We had destroyed their missile storage areas and the skies were ours. And we could go in and do what we pleased. And we could have at that point begun bombing factories, anything that we wanted to bomb, and continued it for months and they would have had no hope. They could have done nothing to stop us.

VOOGT: You would have had a military victory.

SILVIA: We would have had a military victory, in my opinion. That is my opinion.

VOOGT: So, how did you feel about the politicians deciding to go back to the conference table after those eleven days?

SILVIA: Well, there is two sets of emotions actually, because no matter what I am saying about flying up there with impunity, there is always the threat that you could be shot down somehow. So you're a little worried about that and at the same time we did not especially like the idea of quitting and not destroying them.

The crew of the B-52 felt professional, and basically, what they wanted to do was what they had been trained to do. Tom Silvia was about thirty-seven years old, and while there were some others his age, there were many young people on the plane. The former B-52 navigator felt strongly that they could have achieved a military victory. "Anytime that the U. S. wanted to do it, we could have done it," he said. What was particularly frustrating was that they were sure they could destroy China or Russia, "and then we were stopped by a country with 17 million people". He concluded that that was not realistic. And therefore, no matter what anyone said, he was convinced that the United States had the military capability at any time to destroy North Vietnam, to completely destroy their ability to make war. He said: "They could have with sticks and stones, but they would have had nothing else. And we just chose politically not to do that. Those are my feelings."

On the island of Guam where they were not actually stationed, but on TDY (temporary duty), Tom Silvia together with some other American airmen, lived with his family. It was weird to hear him say that he had rented an apartment there and had his family, wife and two small sons, over for three months, while he flew over Vietnam and would come back, as if it was a nine to five job. "We had a good time that summer," he said.

There was no war at Guam, which was peaceful, but crowded. At Anderson AB the B-52s stood wingtip to wingtip. The B-52 was an "awesome weapon". The D-model would drop 108 bombs weighing 750 lbs. each. "And flying in a cell of three aircraft in a wave of six aircraft, that is a lot of bombs on a single target. It is just total destruction." Asked how long he had been stationed on Guam, he replied that the first time was when he went over in 1968. He was transferred to Vietnam itself in 1969 and stayed there for a year. He was flying in an UC-123K, old convention 123K, "in a very strange unit". Tom Silvia said that this unit did many strange and unusual things, "which I can't talk too much about or else there will be a knock on my door at four in the morning and that will be the end of me". I asked him whether the information was still classified. He replied, "Yeah. It is still classified. As far as I know, it is still classified."

Silvia returned to the United States in 1970, where he was stationed at Ramey Air Force Base in Puerto Rico for a year. When that Base was closed, he went to Fairchild Air Force Base in 1971. And then he was rotated from there over to Guam, "90 or 120 days at a time, come back for 30 days, go back for 90 or 120. And so it was TDY then, back and forth". In all he flew one hundred missions. When the war ended he was "in and out of Guam and flying whenever they wanted us to. Once again, the bombing was primarily out of South Vietnam. This is crazy!"

On anti-war protests:

What did he think at the time of the on-going protests? "Well, I despised it. Absolutely. We used to joke about whether we could bomb some of the places in the States where the protesting was going on (chuckling). But, of course, that is not rational. You're angry about something like that, because it reflects on what you are doing." He said he did not have to deal with much of that. "Fairchild had protesters outside the gates." However, when he flew back from Guam and landed in the U.S. there "was not anybody protesting".

> SILVIA: I did not have to face it, but soldiers coming back, if they landed in Tacoma or the West Coast, and then they went by civilian transportation, then they had to put up - they were in uniform - they had to put up with these people yelling at them, "Hey, hey, hey, how many babies did you kill today?" And these guys were just doing what their country had asked them to do and the worst part of it was, in my mind, they would come out of the jungle and within 24 hours or so they would be on an airplane and 48 hours after they left fighting, they would be back in the States; and then they were accosted by these people, who were screaming at them and throwing things at them.

On the South:

Repeating Dr. Mayo's quote to Tom Silvia, I asked him what his response was to the statement that the further South you go in the United States, the more patriotic it becomes. Tom Silvia: "It is true. Terribly patriotic."

> SILVIA: In the South they are a little more vociferous about it. They will speak more freely about it, but remember there is still a whole lot of people in the South that wish they had won the Civil War.
>
> At the same time they are more patriotic as far as the country is concerned. The Northerners, in my home state [Connecticut] were -

when I was growing up - I grew up in a different era. The Second World War, I lived though that. I was born in '35 and people were extremely patriotic. I went to a Lutheran - German Lutheran school and every morning we would have, during the war, we would go into the church and pray for American soldiers.

VOOGT: You just mentioned that in the South people are still living with the Civil War and they don't up North.

SILVIA: No, they don't even care about it up there. This bit with the Civil War, though, is true. The people down here, a lot of them still live the Civil War.

VOOGT: And why is that?

SILVIA: Because they lost. And it had a, to them, a tremendous detrimental effect on their, oh, social status, I think. And I think a lot of it is myth, because most of the people that are alive today in the South are descended from people who were poor and did not have anything. Their ancestors did not live in the mansions.[173]

VOOGT: What would be the connection with the different feeling about Vietnam that they have? Would that have to do with the Civil War down South?

SILVIA: Well, you know the South has always been - the one advantage the South had in the Civil War over the North was the patriotism and the willingness to fight that the Southern soldier had, whereas in the North, they did not really care that much about it at all and they made - they did not make as good a soldier as the Southerner did. Outside that, the South had virtually nothing going for it, because it was so much smaller than the North, had so much less industry, railroads ran East and West and not North and South.

A further difference between North and South is related to the fact that for more families in the North than in the South, the Civil War era is not part of their history. Tom Silvia's grandparents, for instance, only arrived in the United States in 1900. Many Southern families trace their ancestors to Virginia or North Carolina before West Tennessee was settled.

Returning to the discussion of the attitude to the Vietnam War in the South, Tom Silvia said:

I think the Southerner, when you're talking about outside our country, becomes more patriotic, *because* - I may be all wet - this is just off the cuff - *they don't want to lose again* at all to anyone anywhere. And remember the South in general was the poorest section of our country and so young men make a career out of the military, because that is a way out of the poverty in the South. In fact, a disproportionate number of officers in the military come from the South, and probably a disproportionate number of enlisted men come from the South also. And it is a way to better yourself, to get

somewhere, to be somebody, and the South looks at the military in a little bit different light perhaps than the North does.

On Vietnam veterans:

The Vietnam War Monument in Washington D.C. "purged a whole lot of ill feeling". Tom Silvia believed this was the effect the monument had on the veterans as well as on the country as a whole. "As plain as it is, you can't hardly walk by the Wall without tears running down your face." He felt that it was "a catharsis of sorts".

SILVIA: I think it has brought the Vietnam veteran out of the pits and into the light, and now the country is rethinking to some degree what they did to a lot of these people; and how badly they were treated and how that affected them. And to some degree at least [the country] is trying to make up for it. Some of these guys when they came back to this country could not get jobs. As soon as they said they were a Vietnam vet, they would not be hired. So they would not say that they had been to Vietnam. They would lie about it.

On My Lai:

He said to me, "You know about Calley?" Tom Silvia then made the point that the United States tries to be moral, unlike many other countries. "When you try your own soldiers and convict them of crimes during wartime that is a big thing. And he (lieutenant William Calley) was tried and convicted and what he did was wrong. Absolutely wrong."

When Silvia said that his reason for volunteering to go to Vietnam was because he did not want to miss the war, he was following in the footsteps of many other career soldiers. Together with most of the fighting men interviewed Silvia was convinced that America could have won the war. He proved his point by outlining the effects of the so-called 11-day war in December 1972 when North Vietnam was "bombed into oblivion". America, however, then resumed the peace talks in Paris instead of trying to achieve military victory.

Born outside the region, yet having lived in the South for a prolonged period of time, Silvia's perspective on the South is interesting, as it is not emotionally colored by the burden of Southern history. For this reason perhaps he referred to Southerners in general as "they", in the interview. A large number of Southerners, according to Silvia, "still live the Civil War"; at the same time they are very patriotic "as far as the country is concerned". Silvia is right when he says that patriotism in the

South is directly linked to the military defeat which the South suffered in the Civil War. For Southerners the War in Vietnam was an important war to win: the cultural awareness of the American regions outside the South did not and does not include an overpowering presence of the Civil War, such as in the South. Having lost a war once, Southerners did not and do not want to lose again.

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(xliii) LARRY BANKS (white)

Larry Banks was born in Haywood County. His father originally came from Georgia. He "worked his way over" during the depression to the Mississippi River and built the levee, and worked his way from Mississippi up to Tennessee and then cut across country. Larry Banks' mother was born in Haywood County, and lived there, when his parents first met. Larry was born in 1941 in Haywood County. He attended Haywood High School and went to Vanderbilt University in Nashville on a football scholarship. He obtained a BA degree in 1963. Thereafter he was in ROTC, graduated, and was commissioned a 2nd lieutenant in the Quartermaster Corps. He married after graduation, and the newly weds went to Fort Lee, Virginia for a few months, and then to Germany, in the vicinity of Frankfurt. In December 1966 he received orders to go to Vietnam. He returned to the United States, before flying to Vietnam in January, 1967.

In Vietnam the Quartermaster Corps was responsible for supporting three squadrons. The supplies either came in by road, and if that was impossible due to enemy conflict, they would come in by airplanes. Larry Banks served with the 15th Supply and Service Battalion, which was responsible for supporting food, clothing, ammunition and fuel for three squadrons. They were in a unique place where people were primarily concerned about who had the best volleyball team and who had the first swimming pool and all that. He stayed there about two months and was really kind of disappointed in what he was going to accomplish, until he had an opportunity to go out to what was called forward base camp, where the real work was done and where the ammunition was supplied. He went to what they called "the landing zone English", which was just outside a little village, called Bong Son, where he stayed for the rest of his tour. Forward base camp was much preferred, because "there were no inspections and shined boots".

L. BANKS: When I finished ROTC, supposedly you had two years obligation, and there was this other term called "volunteer indefinite". And when I finished ROTC, they said, "Look, we'll fly

you and your wife to Germany. She can go with you free; you can have government housing, and all it is, is one more year." So it would be three years rather than two. And at the time that was fine for me. So, I signed up for "volunteer indefinite".

Well, when the Vietnam War came along, they said "volunteer indefinite" means as long as we need you, we can keep you. So when I went to Vietnam, I was expecting to be there a full year, even though I had already been in two and a half years when I got there. But there was a lawsuit filed by some 2nd lieutenants and 1st lieutenants and, of course, that it could only be a three-year obligation. So I stayed in Vietnam until August of 1967, from January to August of 1967. I could have come home sooner, but I did not have anything to do at home. I was making good money; my wife was in school finishing up. And then I got accepted into law school at the University of Tennessee. So, I got out in August, came home, she graduated, I entered law school and she taught school.

When he was in Vietnam, two of Banks' relatives were also serving in Vietnam. He visited his first cousin Webb Banks one day in an airplane. He flew over, spent the night and visited with him. Another first cousin was a fighter pilot, whom he did not see in Vietnam. Webb Banks worked in logistics in the Air Force, while Larry was doing the same job in the Army. "The Air Force had it much nicer," Larry said. "Like out at the landing zone, we would sleep in tents, we would take ammunition boxes and build up about three feet and then put the tent up around it. But we had bunkers and all that kind of stuff. One morning real early we had -, we never really knew what caused it, but around our area where we lived, I mean, we had petroleum, about 20,000 gallon bladders. We probably had four of these bladders. Plus right across over the road was our ammunition yard. Something set off our ammunition yard one night and we had 1200 tons of ammunition, artillery shells and all that go off and we had about five people killed that night and the gas caught on fire, and we did not know what was happening. I grabbed my boots and went out in the bunker and I did not look."

On Vietnam veterans:

To return home in Haywood County from the Vietnam War was neither good nor bad. There was nothing official. Banks never had any bad instances where people spat on him or said anything derogatory.

On the Vietnam War:

"I'm not sure, looking back on the Vietnam War, if we could ever have won the war. Looking back I think it was an unwinnable war," said Larry

Banks. He argued that it was wrong for the United States to try to impose its values and form of government on other countries. He doubted that all countries should have what the United States had. On a personal level Larry Banks' experience in Vietnam was good. He concluded, "I have no qualms about talking about it, because, like I say, when I think about Vietnam, I think about some good times I had and I saw things that most people did not have an opportunity to see. Fortunately, I was not hurt, killed or whatever and I came back."

Larry Banks' brief Army career clearly demonstrates a pattern that Southerners are familiar with: while still in high school or at college, students join the ROTC and from there are transferred to one of the Armed Services to complete the three years service obligation that they have. From Banks' perspective America could not have won the Vietnam War.

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(xliv) DR. ARTHUR ELLIS (white)

Arthur Ellis is the oldest of three brothers. He had two younger brothers who went into the Air Force during the Vietnam War. He was in college and so he had a deferment, but "for some reason at some point in '69 - '70", he decided that he had had enough college for a while and let his deferment go out. "So I was classified 1-A very quickly," he said, "and wound up getting drafted into the Army. That is what happened and, of course, when you're drafted, you go for two years. At that time with the war going on, of course, that always seemed like a world away and it was a world away, but that is how I wound up in Vietnam in 1970. I came back in January 1971. I went in about April, '69, and I would have gotten out about April of '71, but at that time the Army had what they called an "Early Out" if you had been accepted at a college or university and were going within three months of your departure date from the Army. So I did not have to stay the full two years. I spent about eight or nine months in Vietnam."

Before going into Vietnam Ellis had spent about a year training in the United States. He went to Atlanta, Georgia. As he was the only college student in that group, they immediately put him in charge of forty or fifty men that were going by train to Atlanta. After basic and advanced training, Arthur Ellis was sent to Ft. Benning for paratrooper or airborne training. All the training was done in the United States, primarily in the South. After Ft. Benning followed Ft. McCellan, Alabama, Ft. Jackson, South Carolina, Ft. Dix, New Jersey, Anchorage, Alaska and then to Japan. Then on to Vietnam, where he arrived at the Air Force Base in Saigon. At that time it was supposed to be the busiest airport in the

world, because of the military flights going out and the fighter planes - everything going in and out.

When he arrived in Vietnam after flying for thirteen hours over water in a Boeing 707, the war effort was in full swing. The big Army base where the new arrivals stayed was heavily secured. They had a perimeter and barb wire fences. They stayed there for two weeks to get used to the heat and the humidity.

ELLIS: While we were there they took the people that had airborne training, had their wings from jumping out of airplanes, and asked us would we like to gather intelligence or be in the intelligence, which is the reconnaissance groups. They only did this with the people who had airborne training because you travel in small groups and they wanted people that had specialized training. I had had the training that way and decided that I had rather do that than be in a line company - would be a hundred men out in a rice paddy. I did not savor that idea. And I did and they took us for special training and then we went up North, up into I Corps, see they had the country divided - 1,2,3,4.

VOOGT: And that was close to the DMZ.

ELLIS: Right. It was as close as you could get. And I was up there the whole time.

VOOGT: Near what town?

ELLIS: Hue, the ancient capital. Now, we were at the base out in the hills away from the city. We went into the city occasionally, but not very often.

The city of Hue was destroyed during the Tet offensive.

In Ellis' line of work there were reconnaissance teams consisting of five men. He said there were a great many intelligence gathering devices. "Basically they would select an area and they would take us out on helicopters and we would land and they would have gunships that would circle just for protection and we would get out. And we would walk around and look and see what we could see for five days and make notes, take pictures, do things like that. And then we would have a designated point; we would be picked up and our point was not to make contact. They would pick us up and we would come back and have what we call a debriefing. They would ask us about what we saw, anything unusual, weapons, anything." And he continued:

What they would do is - we would have designated areas that we could be picked up at certain times and, of course, we were in contact on the radio. We carried a radio all the time. They would pick us up. The only problem was the weather was not too good.

> And during the rainy season, you would get out there and you might be out there more than your five days. And we did not use tents or anything like that, because tents and ponchos reflect light. You can be seen that way so if it rained, we got wet.
>
> You would just sleep sitting up or lying down. What we could do is, we would move during the day and we would select an area to spend the night. But we would not move to that until right at dusk. So what you wanted to do was move into that spot, preferably a spot that would be difficult for someone to move up toward you, without making a lot of noise in the dark.
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> So actually the nighttime once it got dark, was really the safest time, because we would be in "on spot", quiet, listening. And it really was not that bad then. In the daytime you were moving around and it was hot and you were subject to whatever you might walk upon or whatever you might do.

Ellis mentioned that they would carry an extra ration. They used what was called the LRP, Long Range Reconnaissance Packs, which was dehydrated food. It was not very good, but its advantage was that it was light-weight. It could be mixed with water. And so it would last them a long time. To communicate with the planes flying overhead they used a number of devices, including strobe lights (a flash lamp that produces high-intensity short-duration light pulses by electric discharge in a gas) and special devices that would go off and could be turned on and the planes would pick up the sounds.

Speaking about work schedules, he said, "They would put certain teams in at intervals and we would plan to be inserted at a certain time, usually when you call first light." As soon as it was light enough to be inserted, they would take us down and the helicopter would fly low to the ground for a certain distance and all of a sudden it would just drop us. We'd stop; we'd jump out; it would leave. Then we would stay in that position for an hour or so just waiting and listening. So if someone heard us come in we'd still be in a good position if we needed to get out of there."

The reconnaissance groups would have training sessions, dividing up into five-men teams. "You would have a team leader, an assistant team leader, you would have someone to carry the radio, and the man we'd call point-man. He would be up front. He would lead a little bit and we'd stay back, so that if there was something there that he saw, we would not all be in - We trained with those people so we were very familiar with each other and knew each other close. You rely on them and they rely on you." It was a good experience, because everything was equal. "It did not matter if they were people of color. Everything was the same." Arthur Ellis said that out in the field it was strictly business, and nobody in his group used drugs. As he put it, "You only had five guys there, and you depended - your life depended on someone else there, and if they were

doing something that they should not have been doing, you - we did not want them out there with us. Now, if you are back in a group of a hundred men, like I said in a line company, which would be out tramping through the rice paddies, I'm sure there was some drug abuse, because that has got to be monotonous."

Passing on to talk about his feelings for taking part in the U.S. war effort in Southeast Asia, he said, "I was in there to - this sounds trite now, but I felt like that was my duty to do and that was - I wanted to get that done and I did not really have any big political agenda or anything like that. I just knew that there were guys that were going and doing what they were called upon to do, and that is what I felt like I should do." At that time he felt that they were doing something worthwhile. From a present perspective it was questionable whether they should have been there or not, but he "luckily at the time felt totally committed" to what he was doing.

ELLIS: The biggest shock I had probably, the biggest transition was, when I came back to go to college, to work and go back to college. I went to a small liberal arts college there, Roanoke College. It is in Salem, Virginia. It was something like Rhodes, a very small school. And it was hard to adjust. We could be sitting there - a month before I was out in the fields and jungle of Vietnam, and here I was sitting there talking to students, who all they knew about it was what they had read, or saw on TV and they were all authorities, you know, in this. It was a different world.

He found it very frustrating. The people he encountered did not really appreciate what the United States and what the American servicemen had been doing. He said, "Because once you get into a situation where people don't have these things, you take so much for granted that we - free society [have], they don't have over there." Yet, he found that being the only veteran in his classes, was a good experience, from which he benefitted.

Ellis also described his visit to the Vietnam Memorial:

The only other time I have really had an emotional kind of thing was when we were in Washington last summer. And that is the first time I have been to the Vietnam Memorial and to walk along there.

What really got to me was all these names where you look and see this black wall of granite, I guess it is, and you see all those names. You feature those as a family, as a young man who had a family and, in a lot of cases, kids. The sacrifice that was made there and just whether it all was worth it. And you read the books retroactively, after the fact, and you see that the generals knew we

> could not win it, and they did not say so, but no one would listen. And you really wonder, but it is easy to go back and look at it now and say....

People touched the names on the Wall. He watched somebody do it.

> I saw somebody actually reach out - although I did not stay there long enough to do it. Thousands and thousands of names. They were friends of mine, friends that I made there in our group that were killed while I was there. Quite a few of them. And I could have actually reached up and touched their names on there. And this belonged to someone that I really - I shared a beer with back in base camp or something or may have worked with.

Visiting the monument had been rather emotional, because, as he said in conclusion, "It just brings it all back to you."

Arthur Ellis purposely let his deferment run out and thus, indirectly, chose to go to Vietnam. He went out of a sense of loyalty to the men who were already there. At that stage of the war he felt total commitment. The highly specialized nature of the reconnaissance work in which he was involved had a direct bearing on military operations in the area where he was deployed. Consequently, he sincerely felt his tour of duty in Vietnam to have been a positive experience.

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(xlv) DANNY PRESLEY (white)

Haywood High School principal Gordon Perry put me in touch with Danny Presley, who was a junior in high school, when Gordon Perry was hired as a football coach. Danny Presley remembered that they had played in a championship game for three years in a row. He had been drafted in the Army in 1969. He went through boot camp training and then was sent to Ft. Polk, Louisiana, where he had basic training. Advanced training followed in "Tiger Land" in Norfolk, Virginia, which was set up like a Vietcong village. Here he was trained in taking a village and how to scout areas and set up for ambushes. After a six-month period of training, he left for Vietnam in July as an infantry soldier. The first stop was in Oakland, California, where he received his uniforms and "everything". He

was then flown to Vietnam, where he had about a week of in-country training, which he explained as "just learning about the country and the people and things like that before they took us out to our unit".

VOOGT: Where were you in Vietnam?

PRESLEY: I was stationed about fifty miles northeast of Saigon. We were the patrol unit for the area between Cambodia and Saigon. We had control of Highway 1 that ran from North Vietnam all the way down. It went to Saigon and we had to run road security for that every once in a while, plus we had search and destroy missions where we would go out looking for things. Set up ambushes at night. They had night from seven o'clock till seven the next morning. It was curfew and no one was supposed to be out except for American soldiers. We would go out at night and set up ambushes for the Vietcong. Go up and down a village and wait for them to come back in, or set up an ambush and see if anything would come through that area.

VOOGT: It must have been kind of hard to determine whether they were good Vietnamese or bad guys.

PRESLEY: Well, a lot of the people that we worked with, the South Vietnamese Army - we had what was called Kit Carson scouts with us, who were former Vietcong, they had surrendered and they had started working for the Americans. They said that about half of the South Vietnamese Army was Vietcong. They would go out on patrol with us during the daytime and go set out booby traps for us at night.

VOOGT: Then you don't have very friendly feelings for the South Vietnamese Army.

PRESLEY: Well, they would make the Americans do things that I did not like. I was wounded over there and we had gone out with a company of South Vietnamese. They took us out on helicopters and they would take the Americans out first and let them secure the area, and then they would bring the South Vietnamese Army in. Then we would get ready to go, they would come get the South Vietnamese Army first, so we could keep the area secure. And then they would come back and get us.

VOOGT: How did you get wounded?

PRESLEY: A buddy of mine tripped a grenade - a booby trap grenade. I was about 18" away from it when it went off. I spent a little time in the hospital, about 8 months. They medivaced me back to the United States and I spent 7 months at Millington, Tennessee [near Brownsville] at the naval base there, recuperating. Then they sent me back to full duty at Ft. Mead.

VOOGT: So you recovered completely.

PRESLEY: Well, I was not really, but they sent me back to full duty at Ft. Mead, Maryland and I was with the riot control unit for Washington D.C. in the early seventies.

VOOGT: Must have been worse in a sense.
PRESLEY: Well, it was, because I had just gotten out of the hospital and the first heavy duty I had - it just like to have killed me. So I went to the doctor the next day and he put me on what they call "full physical profile," which is no running, jumping, prolonged standing, marching or anything. So I spent about six weeks just arms room guard or up at the headquarters. Just running messages and things like that until they transferred me to the Medical Brigade. I was a clerk in Brigade Headquarters.

When he was sent to the riot control unit, the military were aware that he had been severely wounded in Vietnam. Yet he was sent there, because he still had not completed his two years. His work in Washington D.C. was to control the student protest. "Plus the blacks were congregating in Washington, which triggered off riots." He never talked to any of the demonstrators. And, in fact, was not allowed to. Danny Presley did not really want to be there, but had no choice. Yet he believed that many of the demonstrators "had good points in what they were trying to do". Many people did not feel that the U.S. should be in Vietnam. He said, "That was a transition period also with desegregation and there was a lot of marches and things going on then and people just expressing their opinions of what their rights were."

Returning to his Vietnam experience, he said that he had only been there for about two and a half months when he was wounded. He was in a unit that carried out a lot of "search and destroy" missions in areas where the Vietcong were.

PRESLEY: It was not so much jungle where I was; it was more like rice paddies. You would find some jungle every once in a while, but not a lot of it. I was in the southern part and down there it is more flat open land, hedge rows and a few trees and a few forests, but nothing like up in the north, where it is all mountains and forests up there.
VOOGT: Did America go into Cambodia at the time?
PRESLEY: I was wounded about two weeks before our unit went into Cambodia. My unit was the first unit into Cambodia. As a matter of fact, I met my replacement in the hospital. I was in a little PX in the hospital, and there was a black soldier in there that had the same arm patch that I did and I asked him what unit, and he was right down to my squad. He got wounded; he had just gotten in the country when they sent him to Cambodia, and he got wounded.
PRESLEY: We patrolled along the Saigon River, which is one side is Cambodia and the other side was Vietnam. We patrolled along there once in a while.

When he was in Vietnam, Danny Presley received letters from people. And when he was wounded, he spent about a week and a half in the hospital in Vietnam, after which he was medivaced to Japan. It was about two weeks later that his mail caught up with him and the first batch of mail that he received amounted to sixty cards and letters from people at home. News that he had been wounded had spread quickly. He said that when a soldier was wounded, the American Red Cross would contact the parents. If someone was killed a representative from the military would come. He said, "Dad knew that I had been wounded probably eight hours after I was hit." He was wounded about noon "and it was like thirteen hours different and they told him eight o'clock that night. He was at church and they came and got him out of church and told him." He said that one thing that the people of Brownsville did "and I really appreciate it" - they were going to send his parents to Japan to see him. They were going to pay their way to Japan to see him, but he was medivaced home before they were able to. He remembered that he had a tough plane flight from Vietnam to Japan. He looked like a mummy. He had bandages all over, because of shrapnel wounds; thirty-three holes had to be sewn up, "and a couple of hundred that did not. I have got X-rays of my whole body and it just looks like little specks". He said he only lost one organ, and did not lose any fingers. [The explosion] "blew the palm out of this one (showing one of his hands) and messed up this knuckle, messed up my shoulder. I caught most of it from about here down. I caught one right there and one went through my dog tags and hit right there. But if the dog tags hadn't hit it, it would have probably keep going on through that bone there, but it just struck right there." Sitting at the table across from me, he pointed as he talked. Remembering that Christy Smith had told me about him being wounded in Vietnam, I asked him about it. He had not been in one of the hospitals she was at, but he had talked to her on the telephone. "She called me one day and I talked to her and they sent me a letter or two while I was over there." They were between a hundred and a hundred and fifty miles apart. Danny Presley was sent to Drake Army Hospital, which is farther inland. He relived the amazement of that time and said, "They said I had a phone call and I said, 'Well, who in the world would be calling me? Nobody knows I'm here.' And it was her. They had received word."

Lighting the eternal flame on the court square in Brownsville, later that year, had been a memorable experience.

> PRESLEY: I got wounded on October 7 and I was back in the States on November 1st, I believe. November 11th, which is my birthday and also Veterans Day, they were lighting the eternal flame that day for all the dead and wounded soldiers. And I got to come home that weekend, so they asked me if I would light the flame up there for them. I was so weak that I could not - I held onto it, but I could not really turn it, but, I helped them light that; I think that was

unique in a way too, *because in a lot of places in America, veterans were not warmly welcomed.* [my emphasis]

On Brownsville and veterans:

PRESLEY: There is a lot of former World War II veterans here. Prisoners of war and just veterans. My father was a veteran of World War II. And the people of this community know and understand what war is like. And we lost several people from here.

VOOGT: In the Vietnam War?

PRESLEY: Yes. Some good friends of mine that I went to school with, graduated with. There was two out of my class that were killed in Vietnam, almost three.

When I was there I felt that we were doing the right thing, the job that we were doing there. We were trying to help the people where they could have a secure way of living without having to worry about somebody coming in and taking everything they had. The people over there had nothing. I mean, the poorest people here live like kings compared to the average person over there. I mean back in the thirties, forties, fifties, we used to have a lot of people live in little ole shanty houses. That is good housing when I was in Vietnam. I mean, something like that was great!

A lot of the people lived in mud houses with thatch roofs. As a matter of fact, we had road security from our fire base up to Highway 1, which was about eight miles. And there was a little village about halfway. The mayor of the village lived in a house; the walls were made of mud about two feet thick, but he had a tin roof. He was the only one in town that had a tin roof. The people had nothing. If they had a bed, they had no mattress in it. They just slept on the slats, boards or some kind of woven mat. They might have one set of clothes; they wore them all the time.

VOOGT: Who would take things from them? The people from up north?

PRESLEY: Yeah. The VC would come in and take all of the food and anything that they could. Most of them did not have anything. These guys would come in and just move in with them, just take over their lives really. It is a completely different world than what most of us are used to. I felt so sorry for a lot of the people because they had nothing.

I felt that we were right when we just dropped everything and moved out. In the period of time that the American forces were there, those people had grown dependent on the American soldier. Their livelihood for a lot of them - a lot of them worked for the American Forces either preparing food or just moving things about or just whatever they needed.

And then when the Americans just abruptly up and leave, that just

left a lot of them out and those that were friends with the Americans when the Vietcong came in, that was bad news.

There were so many that there was no way they could get out. They had nothing to get out with. Unless you were friends with some upper echelon officer or something, who had some pull - you just sat there. I often wondered what happened to the Kit Carson scouts that we had; they were the Vietcong that came over working for the Americans. We had three or four of them in our unit.

VOOGT: There is no way of finding out, is there?

PRESLEY: No way of knowing. I had some pictures of one. He was maybe four foot tall, very small. That is how we knew that a lot of the South Vietnamese Army was Vietcong, 'cause they told us.

We were coming back in one day from road security and there was a South Vietnamese camp about a hundred yards off the road, and right before we got there, there were some shots fired. Well, they just turned their weapons down on automatic and just sprayed the camp over there. He said one of them was shooting at us. He said that was not accidentally: one of them was shooting at us.

The Vietnam War was just a political war. I will say most of it was really. I did not want to go when I was drafted, but I had no choice. I felt it was my obligation to do it.

The only way this country is going to stay the way this country is, is for people to defend this country. And if we just say, "Well, I don't care. I'm not going to." Then sooner or later those people are going to start coming to our country and taking over.

VOOGT: I talked to Tom Silvia; he feels that America could have won the war.

PRESLEY: Oh, there is no doubt about it. We would go out on patrol and take this area and then just right back to our camp and let them have it right back. We did not go out and take, like there was no front line. If you heard there was activity in this area, you would go out there, take care of it, and just go back and let them have it back. What did you accomplish?

I have talked with several veterans who were fighting up around the DMZ and they said they had patrols in through there all the time. As a matter of fact, he was up in North Vietnam on patrol and they ran into a Chinese army. The Chinese army was in North Vietnam fighting with them.

They were not supposed to be involved, but these guys - most of the Vietnamese were small people. You see, these guys were as big as we were. Full uniform, full military gear, everything, all the weapons they needed.

On Vietnam veterans:

Did he attend Veterans Day? Danny Presley usually did. He conceded that

it was just himself and one other guy, so only two Vietnam veterans, who "were ever up there". He backtracked to zoom in on the day he got wounded.

> They would take us out on helicopters to this certain village and we would go through the village and just search and see if we could find anything. We had gone through it pretty rapidly and the colonel did not think we had done a good enough job, so he made us go back through it and search a little deeper. So I had gotten off the main road and there was like a treeline coming to the main road. It came up and then L-shaped back to the south. Well, I came in on the south side of it and went in at the corner and was going to work my way back to the road. The Vietcong liked to build bunkers down in a wooded area like that. They would just dig a hole and live in that. It got real thick and I could not get through it, so I - coming back out of it at the same place that I went in, because I knew that I hadn't tripped any booby traps, and the friend of mine walked right across in front of me and I saw him trip the wire. I saw the trip wire to the hand grenade, and I said, "Don't move." He looked around and said, "Have I tripped it?" About that time I saw it go off.
>
> When the South Vietnamese Army found out that we had people wounded, they called the helicopters to come get them and take them back to their base. Our troops had to finish the - that is the kind of thing that they were doing. It gives you a bad taste when they do things like that.

During these operations American officers were in command though, Danny Presley confirmed. He said that the Americans had no choice. His squad leader told him all this when he visited him in the hospital. The soldier who tripped the wire, had his back to the blast, while Danny sort of had his left side to it.

> PRESLEY: It got both of us. He caught it all up the back and his legs were messed up pretty bad. He had arterial bleeding in the legs. The two medics, one was a company medic and one was the platoon medic, both used up all of their packages of bandages on us. When they heard us yelling, they just came running through that big pile of bushes that I had just gone through. I had gone through it real careful to make sure that I did not - he just ran through it like it was not even there. They were working on us and some of the other guys got to looking around and found three other booby traps within almost ten feet of us.

The medics were taking great risks, but he said that they would do that. "When they would hear somebody holler, they just took off a beeline right where he was."

The day when Danny Presley told me his story in the cafeteria of Southwest Tennessee Electric Membership Corp., Brownsville, was 14 December 1995.

The attitude in the South as regards the draft, also during the Vietnam era, was that when your country called you went. This also is the kind of patriotism that transpires from the interview with Presley. In Vietnam Presley felt that his presence made a difference, convinced as he was that he was helping the population.

Deployed in a patrol unit where American servicemen had to work with South Vietnamese soldiers, the Americans developed negative feelings about the South Vietnamese Army. This was based in part on the ally's pusillanimous tactics in the war zone and in part on the information provided by the so-called Kit Cardon scouts. Yet, Presley never doubted that America could have won the war.

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(xlvi) MAYOR WEBB BANKS (white)

Colonel Webb Banks' parents were originally from Georgia. They moved to Brownsville in 1937. Webb was in first and second grades in Brownsville. Then his father, who was in construction business, moved to Ripley, and after that to Arkansas, coming back to Brownsville in 1946. Webb Banks went to a private high school called Webb School, which was a college preparatory school. It is how he got his name. So, was it a nickname? "No," he said, "the gentleman's name was Webb, Gerald Webb, so I was named after him." He got into the military by first joining ROTC when he was in college, "basically trying to stay out of the Korean War", in order to finish his education. On graduation he became a 2nd lieutenant and he had a three-year commitment. When the three-year commitment was up, he decided to stay in; so he stayed in about 25 years.

Banks was in the U.S. Air Force, where he was in logistics or supply. When the Vietnam War started he was living in France. Instead of going to Commanding Staff School, his assignment there was canceled and he was sent to Vietnam. He set up a base, called Phu Cat. It was one of the numerous Air Force Bases that was set up, but Phu Cat was the largest of those bases in South Vietnam. It was situated three or four hundred miles north of Saigon, close to the Army Base of Qui Nhon, and close to the sea.

W. BANKS: Basically my job was to have the base ready when the airplanes came in where we could support a squadron of airplanes. We did not ever -, it was kind of crazy for us, because one day we were sitting up on the balcony and we were maybe having a martini. And the Vietcong was at a distance you could see them, and they were down in a [rice] paddy, and they were looking. The helicopters were moving the Koreans in, and you could hear them shoot.

And here comes a regular American-type street sweeper spraying the streets, and we were sitting up drinking martinis and I remember one of the older guys said, "This is the damnest war I ever seen; we're sitting up here, we watch them fight down there, and here comes a street sweeper down, cleaning the streets."

I was in logistics and my job was basically to insure the support for aircraft and maintenance, so we never did have a whole lot of really bad action in our area.

The Koreans were very, very, very tough fighters. The sector Phu Cat was the Korean sector. They had it for protection. And we just did not have much of a problem. Now, you could not drive the roads at night, because you would get shot at night, but daytime, they were perfectly safe.

The South Korean Army in Vietnam would have a sector; the Australians would have a little sector, but Phu Cat was assigned to the Koreans. "And boy did they protect it! I remember one time the Vietcong attacked their base; their base we could see from ours. They shot about seven men; and they were on the wire. They would not remove the men from the wire. They just let them lie out there. And, of course, this was totally adverse to us. Finally, our medics went over to the base and asked them to move them and they did, but they had a different outlook on life than we did. They said, 'Hey, when they see these dead people here, they think twice before they attack.'"

Webb Banks stayed at Phu Cat for the duration of his tour of duty. When he first arrived in Vietnam he had to get used to the way things were done there. His last assignment had been in France where money was really tight due to the expense of the Vietnam War. Therefore when he got into Phu Cat, he called the finance officer at Da Nang and asked, "How much money do I have?" He said he had been so tight of money - and the officer in Da Nang replied, "Major, I don't know. I tell you what you do, you just start spending and if we run out, we'll call you." Which prompted Webb Banks to say, "You've got to be kidding."

W. BANKS: I was down there about three months and I got a call that said, "Your bitter wine kit is in." And I said, "What?" And they said, "Your bitter wine kit." I said, "What's a bitter wine kit?" And they said, "I don't know. It is just in. I have got all these dockets,

two shiploads."

So I called Saigon and the bitter wine kit was everything that a base would need to be set up. So you could see what I had. I had done ordered everything - never knew about this kit - this is something that they set up and somebody in Washington, D.C. set these up. It is what a base of my size would need and was automatically shipped to me. They just forgot to tell me. So, basically I had double everything.

VOOGT: What did you do with it, trade it with the bases?

W. BANKS: Well, I did a little trading and I did ship some to other places, but when I left, when I flew out, there would be piles of stuff under tarps. And then I did have an experience after the war; I was in Washington, D.C. and I got to work for three or four months in Lessons Learned in Vietnam. So I went to a special study group and I wrote papers on *Lessons Learned in Vietnam*, and, of course, these were some of the things I wrote about.

VOOGT: You did not see much action because of the reasons you explained, but did you - the officers among themselves - discuss the politics of war or were you just too busy?

W. BANKS: No, of course I have a different aspect - you've got to realize one thing - I have a different aspect about the war than a lot of people.

Number One, I was a professional soldier. That was my job. I had been in the service, I don't know, say fifteen years at that time and I really never -, that was the only war that I ever had and that was my first chance to see if I could really do what supposedly I had been trained for, and everybody that I worked with and around the officers and all, all the airmen as far as that is concerned, we were all career, most of us were career people. So our attitude obviously was a lot different than if you were in the Army or some of the Marines, where you were drafted, and you come in and - that is where the real differences were.

Around my unit, we were - and the war was still going pretty good at that time, it was '66, '67, the war was - we were on the uphill and, of course, we were on the downhill later on, so the morale around my people was pretty good and we all had - it is hard to say and I don't mean - we really had kind of a good time, let's say, a good experience.

We were building, working 24 hours a day and we got moved in in January and I believe that on 17 April the planes came in and they flew a mission. They came in that morning and flew a mission that afternoon. So you have got a lot of sense of accomplishment. We went there, it was a bare base, there was nothing there but some places for us to sleep, then in January, and then on the 17th day of April everything was up. The airplanes came in that morning and they flew a mission that afternoon.

VOOGT: Where did they fly their mission?

W. BANKS: Up North. They were bombing up North.
VOOGT: What type of aircraft were they?
W. BANKS: F-4s. A lot of these airplanes that we had were F-14, a trainer plane. So basically you could not fly your regular planes to spot targets up there, because they had so many missiles, you know, so they fly these F-4s. You would have your man that spotted the targets; and they used to say when they went up there, they usually had two speeds: wide open and afterburner, because those planes could dodge the missiles, where the slow planes, they could not fly, and what they would do is, they would go up, spot the targets, call in the carrier planes off the carriers to come in and because they could get in close and bomb the target and go back to the carrier and then our planes, the Supersabres they called them - they would go up and spot the target and then we had some other squadrons that actually did some bombing too.

When he had just returned to the United States, Webb Banks had many speaking engagements. At that time he had a positive feeling about the war effort. Later on, though, he "kind of changed his mind". But at the time he thought it was the right thing. While we were talking about people's changing attitude to the war, he interrupted himself, saying, "I will say this. I really feel that if they would have let the military run the war, we could have brought it to a successful win. But they had so much politics. Everyday we would sit in a briefing in the war-room, every day, every morning. I was there to try to explain why I could not get an airplane to fly because of the lack of parts, but I did get to listen. We would talk about targets. We could have closed North Vietnam down in two weeks. Basically what you have to do is four or five power generators, knock all the power out, blow three or four targets and [it would have affected] about half the land and the war would be basically over." I asked him if he was referring to Hanoi and Haiphong?

W. BANKS: Yes, up North. We could have shut them down, with no electricity at all, but we never were allowed to get not one of those electrical plants, never allowed. But every mission had to be approved by Washington. D.C., and what our missions were. We could shoot trains, bomb trains, we could bomb missile sites, we could shoot up trucks on the road, but, hey, look, there are too many trucks. You can't shoot up enough trucks and trains and missile sites to ever win a war. That is an absolute fact.
VOOGT: Who in Washington do you think stopped the military from doing this?
W. BANKS: I don't know. It was the whole concept at the time.
VOOGT: You would not point to Secretary McNamara?
W. BANKS: No. Well, I guess he was - he was the secretary of

> defense and so I assume that he set the policy. Of course, as military people you've got to realize you don't ever want military to run the government. Civilians always run the government. So our job is to carry out what the government says. I'm sure they had reasons that they felt were right at the time. Maybe they were afraid that it would escalate the war or it would get bad publicity. I'm not sure what their ideas [were], *but I do know that we could have won that war, easily, very easily* [emphasis added]. And it went on for years and years. If we hadn't stopped it and would have continued to fight it like we fought it, it could have been another hundred-year war, because, basically, we fought when they wanted to, if their supplies got tight, and they would not attack for a while. And we would sit there and wait. And then they would start back and we would start back. So if we hadn't pulled out, if we would have continued the same policy we had, I don't think, I think we would be there today and still shooting each other, you know. But it was bad, I think everybody will tell you now it was a bad idea and what you've got to do in the military is when you go in, you've got to know what your objective is, you go do your objective and get out. That is if you want to win, or if you just want to win a small thing, you know what it is, you put everything you've got, you get that objective and then you move out. But we never had that in Vietnam. We never had a real objective. We played pacifications and all these little games, but we never had a "Let's wipe out North Vietnam, let's close her down, wipe the population out." We never had that.

The typical Southern affiliation with the military can also be observed in Webb Banks' career, starting as it did in ROTC at college. Vietnam was a positive experience in his case. It had given him an opportunity to prove that he could do what he had been trained to do. At the time when America was in Vietnam, Banks believed that America belonged there. Even in retrospect he felt that America could have won the war. (We could have closed North Vietnam down in two weeks).

(xlvii) BILL LEA (white)

William Miller Lea was born in Haywood County on 29 May 1948. His parents were also born there. He grew up in Brownsville, went to public schools in Haywood County, and attended the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. He stayed there for two years, then went into the service for two years. When he got out he went back to college and graduated from the University of Tennessee at Martin.

Lea was drafted sometime in 1969. He said that "the War in Vietnam was going at a pretty fast rate". Every young man had to register

for the draft when he turned eighteen and could have a deferment for four years to go to school. Deferments were also granted for medical reasons. Bill Lea had a four-year deferment to go to school, on condition that he stayed up with his class at that particular time. In 1969 he changed schools, got behind in his class and "basically got drafted".

VOOGT: *Did you think of that when you made the change from* Knoxville to Martin?

LEA: Well, it was different at that time. The draft was pretty strict. You had to keep up with your class, you had to be sophomore, second quarter, first quarter, if you dropped a quarter back, you got drafted basically. And I got behind in my quarters and basically I knew I was going to get that, so I was drafted and it is a strange thing. At that particular time when I got drafted, we got to Memphis and 90% of the people who were inducted in the U. S. Armed Forces go to the Army, and a certain amount goes to the other branches. And when we got to Memphis, the U. S. Marine Corps needed some people and I was drafted into the Marine Corps. So I got to spend my two years in the Marine Corps.

I left Memphis to San Diego; got basic training in San Diego, then came back to the East Coast to Parris Island, which is close to Savannah, Georgia, and I was there for four or five months. Then we got orders to go to Vietnam. Back to the West Coast, and go through a staging procedure, get all your shots, get all your - you know, get your medical stuff up to date, and then you go to the units over there. They classify you and you go.

We went from California to a place called Camp Squab in Okinawa, Japan. It was a small island close to Japan. It had a big Marine Corps base there, which they further classified you - gave you your jungle clothes, your weapons, and all that were given to you at Okinawa, and then, we stayed there approximately a week, stored all your clothes until you got ready to come back. Then you went from there to Vietnam, and you were assigned units when you got there. All the Marines were with the First Marine Division, and the First Marines and Fifth Marines were in Vietnam at that time, and I was assigned to the First Marine Division. We were stationed outside Da Nang, Vietnam.

In Saigon, they had a big air base there, and it was a lot of commercial flights went in and out there, because at that particular time, Saigon was a fairly controlled city by the United States government.

Da Nang was kind of a hot spot. It was not very secure. Now, the commercial flights never stayed there long. Like we were told when we were going into the air base there to get ready to unload real quick. I mean, you got out more or less running and then they shut the doors and took off real fast. They did not stay there long. This

plane we unloaded; it was gone in thirty minutes. See, we had no baggage. We had no luggage to pick up. So, all they were doing was carrying human bodies over there.

Da Nang air base, situated on the coast and far to the north in South Vietnam, was a dangerous place to be. There were frequent rocket attacks at night, but in the daytime it was relatively safe. Lea pointed out that Da Nang was a United States Air Force base. He landed there and was stationed eight miles to the north at a place called Friendship Field, which was Company Headquarters in that area.

LEA: Da Nang was a - Vietnam was a very mountainous country. It is jungle plus it is very hilly, mountainous. And we were, our base was located defense-wise on the edge of a mountain, where, if we got attacked, we had to get attacked over the top, which was hard for them to climb up - or either had to come up to us. And the rocket attack, they had to attack us in the open, because we were on the side of the mountain and they could not get above on the other side and shoot. The point why they were located there was that the enemy would have used rockets.

At the base where he was stationed the Americans worked with Australians, Koreans and some Taiwanese.

LEA: They were really, really good, dedicated people, the Koreans. You could not have asked for better people to work with. They were entirely dedicated. We liked them because they meant business. We had to be really careful if we got incoming rounds from, say, this position over here. We were required, because of bad publicity in the past, to really check it out before we shot back. The Koreans, you just shot one time and that was it for them. And we liked to be around them, because we did not have to answer for them. They answered for their guys and, you know, they were a very well-trained military outfit. And a lot of people here in the United States did not know that the Australians and the Koreans helped us as much as they did. They all thought it was the United States' war, but the Koreans and Australians were there in pretty well force.

Lea was in a support unit. His main job was to support the man-power there. His unit was the outer perimeter support, and therefore was responsible for the guarding of the base at night. From their position they

could see the rice paddies. It was a very rich, agricultural area. The peasants harvested the rice three times a year. He had some photographs, which he started to explain.

> These were tin roofs, they had screen wire around them, kind of like a porch, because it is so hot. And the mosquitoes were terrible. This was the village that was outside of our compound. The people would try to build villages around military bases for work, for food. Now, when we got air raids at night, that was the bunker that we got in underneath [pointing to a picture]. As you see, what we wore was just green fatigues. It was extremely hot. This is during one of the seasons when the rice is turning brown. It looks like our wheat. All this is harvested by hand, and that was the most interesting thing. These kids and women that get that crop. Here she goes right here, this lady right here, she was cutting the grass. You know, everything is done by hand. And she's getting firewood right there.

One of the main reasons why North Vietnam wanted South Vietnam was for their agriculture. "North Vietnam is cold," he explained. "They could not hardly feed themselves." As Lea saw it, if the North Vietnamese captured the South, it would supply them with the basic food they lacked. Did he have any idea whether the people working in the rice paddies were friend or foe?

> LEA: You really could not tell. I mean, you were fighting an enemy that had no uniform. You really did not know who was who. And it was a very, very deeply divided country. And it was political. And these people had been fighting since the 1950s with the French, and you take somebody that was my age over there. For the last twenty years they had been fighting since World War II, and probably before that. And so the country had been blown all to pieces. It used to be a beautiful country.

During his tour of duty in Vietnam, he was not really concerned with politics. Yet this did not preclude him from thinking about the outcome of the war. "It was very, very evident, once we got there, that this was not something that we were going to win."

> LEA: You know, it was frustrating, because we knew we could, we knew we had the position, the manpower, the machinery, to win this thing. But, we never were allowed to.
>
> We were, say about seventeen miles from the DMZ, where the

line was. Several times we would send people over to Wade Prison Camp, and we would get all excited, thinking that we were going to find somebody. But we never did. And it got to a point your last three or four months there, all you were concerned with was just keeping yourself alive and getting home. There was no advancement, you know, you could see. And the people back home, you could read the newspaper, you could see what they were doing back home. They were demonstrating. And we would hear more on CBS News. You knew more what was going on than we knew, you know.

This war basically was fought by the people in the United States, and you'll hear this and you'll see this if you do much research, *the Vietnam War was fought by the blacks, [and] the white people who did not really have the means and effort to get out of it* [my emphasis].

At that time, if you had a little influence and a little money, you could get in the National Guard, the Reserves, you could stay out of it, really, if you had the right political pull.

A lot of us got caught up in it, and of course, it made a better person of a lot of kids. But, you take a kid that just graduated from high school, throw him in that mess right there; he did not have the money to go to the university or he did not have the money to stay out of this thing, he got thrown right in the middle of this, and it was not like a World War II situation. It was a situation where a kid was shot at, but he was not allowed to shoot back in a lot of cases.

He wore his uniform back here to the United States, and he might have been shot while he was over there, been a hero, and he comes back here and he goes through the LA airport and he gets spit upon.

It took a long time for the people to get over that and it is so sad. But it has been twenty years now; but it took us twenty years to get over that feeling, you know.

VOOGT: The feeling about Vietnam changed at one point. When do you think that was?

LEA: I think it was about five or six years ago. I think it was people here, the ones that were our age, got wiser and older and felt a guilt trip about it. They said, "Look, these people went over there." We were told to go and we went. We did not like it, but we went. And, you know, we did not go to Canada. We did not, you know. We went and we came back. And there were a lot of them got shot up. There were a lot of them that just felt bad or never could get over the situation. - "Hey, let's be accepted." And we finally [were]. It took them a long time.

VOOGT: Was the Vietnam Monument in Washington the starting point of this turnaround?

LEA: I believe, you know, this is going to sound silly, but I believe some of the movies like *Platoon*, and some of the realistic movies that started coming out about Vietnam, made a lot of people see

what people, what these kids actually went through. I mean, you know, you had some good friends over there, that were just friends then.

Focusing on the statistics of the war, he compared the Vietnam War to World War II in terms of the number of American families affected by them. He thought that World War II probably affected eight out of ten families in the U.S., while Vietnam affected one in forty families.

How important were Hollywood movies as regards the Vietnam War from a didactic point of view? Bill Lea argued that Hollywood movies brought the Vietnam War to people's attention: "I think that more people watch movies than probably read newspapers."

VOOGT: Is it an American thing to love movies?
LEA: That is right. It really educates our young, whether we like it or not. It is a cultural thing within the United States. I mean people learn more from Hollywood than they do probably from getting a good book and reading it, because they don't. There are some great books out about Vietnam. I have read a lot of them, but the people don't read it. You see the movies, you see what went on.

During the Vietnam War the local community was very supportive. Yet, as far as what was going on in a wider sense at the time, he did not think it affected the community that much *until one or two of its sons were killed* [my emphasis]. "That really kind of waked them up a little." The attitude became one of "how are we going to keep the rest of our kids out of this thing." People realized that the war would be over eventually, that the U.S. was not going to win it, and that nothing would be accomplished. They believed it was a political war. All of which caused people to think, "I don't want to get my son killed over it, and how can we get him out, let's get him in the National Guard, let's get him in the Army Reserve." When Bill Lea returned from the war, there were many "kids my age" or younger, getting ready to go. "That was their attitude and their parents' attitude."

LEA: It was not a big honor at that time to go serve your country. Hence what they thought was, "get out of it whatever way you can, because you can get over there and get killed for nothing." And that was the basic attitude.

He repeated that support locally was good. It was, "Hey, I'm glad to see you, glad to get you home." It differed considerably from the attitude

veterans encountered in Los Angeles, for instance, where returning veterans were considered baby killers.

On Vietnam veterans:

We talked about local veterans organizations. I said to Bill Lea that it seemed to me that the Vietnam veterans in Brownsville were invisible. He replied that the VFW [Veterans of Foreign Wars] were like his dad. "They were the old guys that had the 4th of July parades, the Armistice Day parades, and we were considered the guys that went and fought the no-name war. We did not win, we just went over there and came back."

On anti-war demonstrations:

> VOOGT: A lot of people in the United States, not necessarily here, confused the soldiers with the politicians who are responsible for it, and that attitude was common, was it?
> LEA: Right. No, it was not here. We had no war demonstrations here. We had not - we, you will notice, in the South, the South still has that, I do not want to say, oh, I'll say, loyalty to its country. You will see more in the Southern states. You'll see more of loyalty to your country - you know, rally around the flag-type than you will any other place in the United States. I have been to several - I have been in several instances in the service where in training and outside of training, you would see these PIs or drill instructors, or instructors say, "Give me a platoon which consists of Southerners any day; I'll take that over any other, because they will stay with you. If you get in trouble, they'll stand behind you." I do not know, you'll see that, I do not know whether it is the society we lived in at that time or what, but, see, when I got out it was the middle of the hippie generation. We had Woodstock, black power and all that peace. It was an interesting time of my life.

The Vietnam War was the first war that could be watched on television. The news was heavily edited, however, and reached American homes with some delay.

> LEA: You could see what we did that day on Walter Cronkite. Uncle Walter would tell them what was going on (chuckling). And he would say very casually, "Today we lost 550 guys. Today we had 300 killed." And your mom would see that and just sit there all night long, wondering if the Red Cross was going to show up the next day at her door and tell her -
>
> It was a strange war. And we worked on body count. And then

there was the way we progressed and that was the way that our generals got promotions. That is the way they worked their deal. General Westmoreland, he was the one that wanted the big body count. He liked that. When [they reported] their body count, you always noticed we would lose 120 and they would lose 2,000.

Did that ever lead him to ask the question, "Well, have we won the war now?"

LEA: The point over there when I really got down, really got angry, and I can talk about it now - , see, we had top secret clearance. There were things going on that we could not tell people at home, which was good, saved people's lives because we were sending kids over in Cambodia, and Nixon would get on television and you would see these news clips, "Never send an American to Cambodia." Well, we were sending them every day over there, you know. But, that was okay, because they were keeping us from getting hurt. I had no problem with that. But when he got on - we were at - it was a citation - Keystone Robbing, when we sent a bunch of kids home and it was, I forgot what operation it was, but it was one of these big operations. We were working like crazy to get these kids out of the country. Nixon said that he wanted 50,000 people home by Christmas. Boy, we worked like hay to get these kids home, you know. *But we were bringing them in through just as fast as we were taking them home*, [my emphasis] but on television he said, "Well, for Christmas presents, I'm going to bring 51,000 kids home for Christmas," which made the American people think he was bringing everybody home. We were bringing them in just as fast as we could. Of course, in a way I was glad because I did not want to get left over there by myself, but it was how he was manipulating the press that made me so disgusted with the system. And I knew at that time that this [the Vietnam War] is just a political thing, that he is using us and these kids out here to get killed to get re-elected.

When asked to share his thoughts on a comparison of American presidents involved in Vietnam, Bill Lea commented that Nixon inherited a mess. President Johnson had got it "cranked up". Johnson thought that he was going to win it, and "he got some bad advice and he got messed up. He got us over there, then used the [Gulf of Tonkin incident] to increase it, and got bogged down. And we could not win it doing what he wanted us to do. And we had a lot of military geniuses that were not military geniuses. And we got ourselves in a mess. And Ford finally said, 'Enough is enough, we're coming home.'"

It was clear to Lea that the Vietnam War was basically fought by those without might and means, the blacks and the poor whites. The National Guard and the Reserves were safe havens for the people who could exert political influence. It was also clear to Lea that the Americans fighting in Vietnam were not allowed to win the war.

It was obvious that Lea was proud to have served with the Marines and proud to be from the South. Looking at Southerners with a soldier's eye, he argued that Southerners showed greater loyalty and made better soldiers.

Lea's argument that certain movies about the War in Vietnam served a didactic purpose is important for several reasons. First, because the realism of a number of movies helped many Americans to accept and even feel sympathy for Vietnam veterans. Secondly, there is also an inherent risk in the importance that Americans generally attach to movies. Even the realistic movies cannot be equated with documentaries, they basically remain works of art. Yet, it is to be expected that post-Vietnam War generations of Americans will be "educated" by just a number of the most popular Hollywood Vietnam movies from the canon.

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(xlviii) ARTHUR FOX SMITH IV (white)

Arthur Fox Smith IV is a descendant of several of West Tennessee's oldest families. He traces his roots to one of Haywood County's earliest settlers, James Bond, and to one of West Tennessee Methodism's pioneering ministers. James Bond of Brownsville, an early settler and planter, was the grandfather of Willie D. Taylor. She was the mother of Arthur Fox Smith III. Arthur Fox Smith IV's mother, Betty Randle Douglass Smith, is descended from Methodist itinerant minister Richard Benjamin Peeples, who was born in Carter County, Tennessee, in 1797. Fox Smith attended Vanderbilt University, graduating with a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering. While serving in the United States Navy he received a master's degree in business administration from the University of Hawaii. After completing his military service he returned to Brownsville to operate his family's business, the Arthur F. Smith Lumber Company.

I went to see Fox in December 1995. He showed me one of his hand-made fishing rods, talking about two of his passions, fishing and hunting, when the discussion drifted to president Clinton's Bosnia policy, which at that time was a hot issue. Many newspapers reflected the extreme reluctance felt by large numbers of Americans to be drawn into yet another conflict with the characteristics of the sort of quagmire that

Vietnam represented in the American mind. When our discussion moved to the Vietnam War, Smith stated that the best fighters in that war were the South Koreans. Smith remembered that [VC] sappers would attack the American camps. They would not attack in a clandestine manner at all, the South Koreans, because the South Koreans would go out the next day and kill a thousand people.

F. SMITH: They just catch somebody and take them up in a helicopter 10,000 feet. The South Koreans were bad about this. They would ask him one time, "Where did this attack come from?" If he did not answer, they'd throw him out and ask the next guy. And by the time they threw three out they'd get an answer. So that ended that. Nobody snuck up and attacked them. Essentially the South Koreans were comparable to the U.S. Seals or Special Forces - Rangers. And they were some bad people. There were not many of them over there.

We fought that war with rules and we had a president and a secretary of defense, McNamara and Johnson, in this country, sitting around drinking coffee in the White House, telling the commanders over there what to do. And that is very comparable to doing surgery on yourself. If you go out there and break your leg are you going to let Christy [his wife] fix it, or me fix it, or fix it yourself? No, you're going to get the best orthopaedic surgeon you can find and you're going to say, "fix my leg".

In contrast to the way they did it, look what Bush did to get the oil fields back in Kuwait. He had professional people, military minds, to go get the oil fields back. He said, "Go get 'em. This is what I want you to do." Just like you would tell a doctor, "Fix my leg." You do not tell them how to fix it. You tell them to fix it. Johnson was telling them how to fight over there. He was telling them what to do. Calling the shots. And he is not any more of a military genius than I am. He was just as qualified as me.

If you were shot at from a church, you could not return fire, because Johnson did not think that you ought to shoot churches. He was afraid we'd make the Russians and the Chinese mad. If they ran across the Cambodian border, or the Laotian border, you could not have fought if you had a village that you were patrolling around, and snipers shot five of your platoon and you are a twenty-three-year old lieutenant, you could not go in there and do anything about it, because it was classified as a friendly village. Remember the My Lai incident with the lieutenant from Georgia, William Calley? He had a company commander named Maddow-Medina or something like that. They classified that village as a friendly village. He lost eleven, twelve guys to sniper fire out of that village and they would not let him do anything about it. And this kid had been there ten months. They finally classified it as a "hostile village". He went in

there and killed everything in there. And this is when they had people the size of Maurits Jan [author's son, aged 11] coming up and saying, "Would you like a bag of coconut or a basket of fruit?" And there was a grenade in it and it blows two of your guys' legs off. Children his age were as dangerous as rifle people. And Calley had had enough.

Now, he may have gone overboard a little bit, but he exterminated the whole village. He says one of my guys is worth more than this whole village and I'm not going to have a kid go get his foot shot or his leg shot. Christy worked at an amputee ward in Japan two and a half years with those guys coming in there that had stepped on land mines and rockets and been shot up, and Johnson had all these rules whereby you could not retaliate. They had these absurd rules.

Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger, one of the first things they did when Nixon went into office, he said, "We're gonna blow Cambodia off the face of the earth." That is when we invaded Cambodia under Nixon. And, finally, they had these armaments and these camps set up right over the border because we were simply not allowed to cross them. Same thing in Laos and the CIA had many, many operations in Laos, but they still could not legally under Johnson's rule, go into Laos. In 1965, *listen to this* (showing emotion), I was working out West and my car broke down in a little town in the mountains of Colorado. This is '65 now. And a guy came in their with a wrecker and he just pulled in, broken down in a car also. And I said to him - we just got to talking -, and I said, "What are you doing?" And he said, "Well, I'm going to leave, I'm going to Vietnam for about a year and a half as an advisor." This is 48 Combat Troops. And I said, "It looks like it is escalating pretty good over there. What's going to happen over there?" He said, "This thing will be over by Christmas."[174] This was in August, because I was coming back to go to college in 1965. I said, "Oh, really? Good. 'Cause I do not want to go. I do not want them to call me, because I'm going to be a perfect age."

I said, "How are they going to stop it?" He said, "They'll block Haiphong harbor, which is Hanoi. They'll cut the supply lines coming out of China. We'll just bomb the railroads and biddies and we'll isolate Hanoi, and there is nothing else left. I mean, they will not have anything to do. There is no way they can fight. No way can they stay open." *Guess when we finally mined and blockaded Hanoi*? [my emphasis]

Just like other interviewees before him, Smith thought that the war had been a political war. He blamed president Johnson for America's failure to beat the North Vietnamese, largely, because the war had not been fought along military lines.

F. SMITH: We did not blockade the harbor. They were still letting ships out. We never bombed the railroads coming out of China. Johnson did not want to bomb Chinese soil and he did not want to bomb Hanoi, because he was afraid of the Russians. But they would not have stepped in; but he killed 58,000 American kids with his gamble.

If you are going to win a war, if you are going to fight a war, there's only two ways to do it. Let's either bring 'em home, or give them whatever tools it takes to kill as many people as we can kill and win and as quickly as we can and get out of there and save as many lives as we can. It is the same argument they gave Truman about World War II. If we had invaded Japan in World War II, some estimates are a million Americans, some of them half a million. I contend, if there is one, my dad was in that war. If they had killed my dad, it is not worth the whole country. I say, "They sink it. Drop seventy-five atomic bombs on it and it is gone. Save my dad's life."

On the South and the Civil War:

The Civil War, Smith believed, was probably a misunderstanding about "what actually this country is". Most of the states "that were in existence then" considered themselves independent countries. This kind of feeling was particularly strong in the South. Here the independent states had formed a federal government, whose essential tasks were to protect the shores and deliver the mail. The innate feeling was that the individual states were independent countries. He said, "Then, all of a sudden, the federal government wanted to outlaw slavery, and raise taxes. And the people in the South said, 'Well, no, I do not think so. We'll just quit. We'll just leave this country. We do not want to be involved anymore. We'll just be in our own country.' Because the North disagreed with the viewpoint of the Southern states, saying, 'We are one country,' the Civil War became inevitable." Smith argued that the war was fought over the right to choose, the right of the individual states to leave the union and to form separate countries.

On the draft:

Despite his criticism of president Johnson's handling of the Vietnam War, he maintained that he would have gone to Vietnam if his country had called him. His attitude echoed the patriotism commonly found in Brownsville and Haywood County, and for that matter throughout the length of the state of Tennessee and the entire Southern region.

From Smith's perspective Washington politics was to blame for America's failure to win the War in Vietnam. The basic mistake, he felt, was that the

Armed Services had not been allowed to fight the war along military lines. Smith's opinion about the outcome of the war echoes that of many others in the local community. It is a widespread feeling, found throughout the country and in books by some of the experts in the field, colonel Harry G. Summers, Jr., among them.

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(xlix) COLONEL RUSSELL TALIAFERRO, USAF, Rtd. (white)

Colonel Russell Taliaferro was in the military from 1942 until 1972. Raised at the height of the Depression in the United States, he aimed to go to college. However, the economic situation indicated that perhaps he would be unable to complete his college education. Yet, this did not stop him from entering the University of Tennessee at Knoxville upon finishing high school. He stayed at UT, Knoxville, for one year. In December 1941, just one week after Pearl Harbor, he very unexpectedly received an appointment to the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York. He went up there, finished his college education and graduated in June 1945 and immediately went into the Air Force. At that time the Air Force was not a separate branch. Having just missed World War II, he spent the intervening years between World War II and Korea in Italy, Germany, and California, and as soon as the War in Korea broke out, he was quite anxious to get some combat experience. He therefore volunteered to go over to Korea, where he arrived in August 1950, the war having started on 25 June 1950. He flew a hundred and thirty-two combat missions out of Japan and Korea, based primarily in Korea at Taegu, flying P-80 fighter bombers over there in 1950 and 1951.

On his return to the United States colonel Taliaferro was stationed up in the northeastern part of the country, where the perceived threat of Russian air attacks was quite great then. The Air Force was inspecting the air defense all around the country at that time and building up bases and aircraft. Colonel Taliaferro was stationed in Maine and subsequently in New Jersey. He left the Air Defense Command and went to Air Force Test Pilot School in California. He then went into aircraft test work for about three years, running the initial test on the F-105 Thunderchief. He had the experience of flying one of the very few early models of the aircraft produced up to Alaska during the winter of 1958 for a cold weather test and subsequently in August 1958 he took the same airplane up to Yuma, Arizona, for a hot-weather climatic test. He also ran tests on the F-104 Starfighter and on the F-100 Trooper. He also flew the F-101 Voodoo.

In 1960 he was stationed in Libya. The combat units stationed in Germany, England, and France, because of the bad weather in Europe,

were scheduled periodically to go down to the air base in Libya to conduct training where they had good weather in the Sahara desert. In 1963 colonel Taliaferro returned to the United States. He was assigned to Florida, where he was a squadron commander with a Voodoo squadron. A new wing was formed down there and in 1966 he was tapped to go over to Vietnam to be an advisor to the Vietnamese Air Force. In Vietnam he flew the A-1 Douglas Guide Bomber, finishing his tour of duty in May 1967. He came home and was assigned to Waco, Texas, then to Austin, Texas, and then to Clovis, New Mexico. From Clovis he was assigned to the Far East again, to the Philippines. He then took a job as base commander of an American air base on Taiwan, retiring from the Air Force in 1972, and moving to Jackson, Tennessee, where he stayed for fourteen years and subsequently moved back to his native Brownsville.

Colonel Taliaferro was involved in what he called the Vietnamese War from the middle of 1966 till May of 1967. He was an advisor to the Vietnamese Air Force stationed primarily at Na Trang, Vietnam, with the last half of his tour of duty spent at Saigon, Headquarters of 7th Air Force. I asked him about the nature of his work as an advisor.

TALIAFERRO: Yes, I flew combat missions; the combat missions over there were a little hard to define, but somewhere in the neighborhood of sixty or seventy combat missions, flying the A-1. And flew some missions out of Thailand also. They closed down the combat activities in South Vietnam during Tet, so we just moved our fighter units over to Thailand and continued bombing the North. There was an agreement between the North Vietnamese and the South Vietnamese, because of the religious holiday of Tet. All the combat activities would stop in North and South Vietnam. The United States Air Force unit was just moved over to Thailand and continued bombing.

VOOGT: What sort of missions did you fly?

TALIAFERRO: It was mostly bombing the jungle out there, making match sticks or killing monkeys. Actually, the targets were not very well defined and I'm afraid that most of our efforts in that regard were wasted efforts.[175]

VOOGT: And what did it do, defoliate the forest or did you drop napalm?

TALIAFERRO: We dropped napalm and we dropped bombs and rockets. Generally, we were guided to our target by Vietnamese spotter planes who would fire a smoke rocket from their little observation plane into the jungle at some undistinguished face of the jungle and they would say, "hit my smoke". But it was in the midst of undistinguishable jungle. Not very easy to judge the results.

I then asked colonel Taliaferro whether at the time the Americans discussed politics among themselves or whether they were just concerned with their missions and getting back safe. He replied, "I'm afraid I talked too much about the war and the missions over there." It had become clear to him, even before he left for Vietnam, on the basis of the political proceedings, particularly the Fulbright Committee Hearings on the Vietnam War, that the United States were engaged in something that they could not win. He went over to Vietnam with a heavy heart, and did not believe in what he called "our cause", but like the rest he did his part as well as he could.

> TALIAFERRO: And I watched some of the Fulbright Committee Hearings and it became apparent to me that we were engaged in a futile task. And then when I was over there it was confirmed, because it was obvious that the corruptiveness of the South Vietnamese Regime became even more apparent - well, I'll stop there.
> VOOGT: You felt when you first went over there that you already knew that this was a war that America could not possibly win?
> TALIAFERRO: I thought our cause was wrong, let's put it that way.
> VOOGT: Well, the theory was the domino theory, conquering Asia and the world.
> TALIAFERRO: Of course, that had proven to be wrong as could be. That concept did not at that time appear to me to be so wrong as the fact that we were supporting imperial living, you might say - not imperialism - the hypocrisy of the South Vietnam regime. And, of course, we were totally supporting them: financially, militarily, and every other way. And the guys from the North were fighting with their bare necessities of life. And much more dedicated to their cause than the people we were supposed to be advising down there. It was not a good feeling.

Colonel Taliaferro confirmed that it was very hard for him to complete his mission, because of his feelings about the war. He did not believe that this was the general feeling. He felt it much more than most of his contemporaries did. Most of them were dedicated, and the saying at that time went, "It is not much of a war, but it is the only war we have got going."

Comparing the Korean War and the Vietnam War, he said that the North Koreans certainly were the bad guys that they had proven to be and that he had had no compunction about fighting the evil of the North Korean regime and subsequently the Chinese. "But," he said, "Vietnam was entirely a different thing. That was a civil war, and, of course, I guess

Korea was a civil war, too, but the guys on the North of Korea were fair people and the photographs that they showed us of American prisoners with hands tied behind them, shot in the back of the head, really was effective of them." Colonel Taliaferro said that he thought that Ho Chi Minh was a patriot more than anything else, rather than a touter of a monolithic communist regime. Discussing Ho Chi Minh's relations with past American presidents, he said that Ho Chi Minh had tried to get American aid, but that America had wrongly supported the French in their imperialistic goal over there. The point where America went wrong probably went back all the way to Eisenhower, who initiated American activities in Southeast Asia. But he went on to say that JFK must share some of the blame for that. Yet he was convinced that "John Kennedy" would not have let the United States become as deeply involved as it did. He thought it had become "a personal vendetta of Johnson's to not stop on that course although it was his downfall".

VOOGT: Did general Westmoreland have to go through the commander-in-chief in Honolulu?

TALIAFERRO: Westmoreland had a direct line to Johnson's area; I do not know what Westmoreland's motives were. I do know that he was badly wrong in his estimate of the situation over there and his reporting to the White House. And I do think there was more to it than Westmoreland as far as Johnson making his decisions though. And, of course, they ran the wrong war. Regardless of the validity of the war, if they were going to win the thing, *they should let the commanders in the field determine what is needed to win it and they should go all out. We should never get in a war that we are not determined to go all out on*[176] [emphasis added]. That was a big mistake - two mistakes, one was the political origin of the thing and the second was the way we fought the war over there with the restraints on everything we did. We could have bombed, as demonstrated in World War II, we could have bombed, could have defeated North Vietnam, liberated them.

VOOGT: When Nixon bombed Haiphong and Hanoi, that should have been done much earlier?

TALIAFERRO: Oh, yeah. Well, if they were going to conduct the war, absolutely, if they wanted to defeat the North Vietnamese, *but they kept trying to restrain the North Vietnamese instead of defeat them* [emphasis added].

VOOGT: Was there not a political reason? They were afraid of China and Russia stepping in, and that is why they hesitated to do that? Do you believe that? That Johnson was scared to provoke the Chinese?

TALIAFERRO: I do not see that as his primary goal, his primary restraint, I really do not. Although it may have played some factor

in it. I do not think China or Russia's reaction were of big concern to our -

He talked about some personal matters, then enquired if I had read McNamara's book, which had recently come out. He offered to get it for me. While he traipsed from the room, Mrs. Taliaferro said that her husband had been offered a Wing, when he was stationed on the Philippines. And while everybody wants to command a Wing, this would mean that he would have to go back to Vietnam. Colonel Taliaferro "had bad-mouthed the whole Vietnam thing so much" that she thought it would not really be a great idea. However, she did not tell him and wanted him to make his own decision. And he turned it down, because he did not believe in it.

When it was put to him that, compared to Dean Rusk, McNamara had shown some courage by publishing *In Retrospect*, colonel Taliaferro laughed and said, "About twenty-five years too late".

VOOGT: Dean Rusk and Nixon never did that.
TALIAFERRO: That is right. This was one of the *big villains* [emphasis added] in that whole affair.
VOOGT: Did you feel that at the time?
TALIAFERRO: Absolutely. It was largely a war of statistics. They counted such things as number of combat sorties as being important to the war effort and they had a tremendous force over there of fighters and bombers and everything. And due to various factors, perhaps logistical problems, in order to keep the sortie rate up, they would send these aircraft up with a minuscule load on them to go bomb with, when they should be going up with a full load if they are going to do any good, you know. But this is to kick the count up, you know, this going out with a couple of hundred pound bombs, when they should have been carrying about four or five thousand pound bombs. Ridiculous.
VOOGT: You call this risking the pilots' lives for a little thing?
TALIAFERRO: Absolutely. *That was McNamara's decision* [emphasis added]. Or we felt that it was. We did not have much feeling about Dean Rusk at that time one way or the other. Incidentally, while I was over there in 1966, president Johnson came to Cam Ranh Bay with Dean Rusk and they were subsequently met there by general Westmoreland. And they had a sort of pep rally for the troops. I was one of several thousand Americans sent to Cam Ranh Bay to greet the president and hear his talk. And I felt total disdain for the president of the United States when he was up there and I refused to go up and shake his hand, not that I was being pushed forward. My feelings on Johnson go back much further than

that, when he made a run for the presidency back in 1960.

At this point the tape became entangled and the interview ended, to be continued a day later. After reviewing the discussion of the day before, colonel Taliaferro, whom my family had met in the summer of 1986 through a mutual friend - Thomas P. McKnight, a veteran of World War II - went on to discuss the American economy and the Vietnam War.

He remembered seeing ships off-loading cargo in Vietnam and the booming American economy, and said,

> There was actually no unemployment, because a million and a half young Americans had been taken out of the workforce. And much of this productivity of the American factory was being poured into Vietnam, and shareholders were happy, and the workers were happy. And the economy was building because of the Vietnam effort and I felt like that the material that was produced would have been better off dumped in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, if it was going to keep the economy going. But why sacrifice these thousands of young lives?

On the draft:

The National Guard and the Reserves were not called up to serve in Vietnam. Instead the military depended upon the draft, which supplied young men from all over America, rather than if they had used the National Guard. They would have been concentrated on one local area and the casualties would have compacted very hard on the community, whereas, as it was, the draftees came from everywhere in the country, and "it did not have near the political impact" that it would have had if the American Reserves had been called up.

> VOOGT: In fact this is the only war where the National Guard was not called upon.
> TALIAFERRO: I believe that is true. They were called upon to some extent, I know, in Korea. I do not know what the magnitude of the effort was in Korea, but they were certainly called upon there.
> VOOGT: And what would be the effect of using the National Guard?
> TALIAFERRO: It would be highly localized, because the units are made up in the small towns and cities all from one locality. The communities would feel the impact very readily both in removing

the young men from the community and from the possible hard deaths that would occur. The deaths that would occur from a draft standpoint, would be scattered all over the country, not from one locality.

VOOGT: I read somewhere that one politician said that if the president had called the Guard in, the whole country would be behind it, because the communities would be involved. That would make sense?

TALIAFERRO: That is another aspect of the thing. I thought the Johnson administration was afraid to do that, because I think the opposition to the war would have been much more vociferous if they had done that. But if you want to get a country behind a war, justify a war, that would certainly be one way to do it.

Backtracking to one of the aspects of the Vietnam War we had discussed, but which had been lost through a mechanical malfunction, colonel Taliaferro commented on the Gulf of Tonkin incident, calling it "a staged offensive". He did not believe there ever was a true challenge to American ships at that time. They knew in Vietnam that whatever did occur "was blown all out of proportion, if indeed it did occur".

On McNamara's war of statistics:

McNamara was very conscious of statistics, colonel Taliaferro stated. The Defense Secretary was a statistical analyst before World War II and during the war. He was very concerned about numbers in that the number of aerial combat sorties were important to him and the national establishment. The effectiveness of these air assault missions was questionable, however. They would order so many sorties ought to be flown, even when the munitions inventory would not support this. So, they would send out many planes with very small bombs on them, much reduced loads from what they could carry, but still it was part of the combat sortie. "I guess the services were partly responsible for that, because the Navy and the Air Force were competing with each other in a certain sense to see who could post the more combat sorties. What hurt me was to see these airplanes going out with maybe a tenth of their bomb load and just to get the statistics up on a mission," he said.

On the home front:

Quite another matter was the link between the United States and the servicemen in Southeast Asia. During the month of December 1966, colonel Russell Taliaferro was hospitalized in Vietnam with a bad case of hepatitis. In the hospital he received Christmas cards and letters from school children and other groups in the United States. "By this time I was

totally disillusioned with the whole war effort over there. I remember writing back to at least one group telling them what a farce the whole situation was over there. I mean youngsters were being killed over there for no apparent reason. It was a useless war."

On the South:

> TALIAFERRO: Traditionally the South has been a big supporter of our armed forces. Throughout our history I think you will find the most loyal Americans are Southerners, even though we had the tragic War Between the States back in the 1860s, still the South has had a great affection for our armed forces and have supported them perhaps better than the rest of the country.

He argued that in spite of all that the people of West Tennessee "were not too adventuresome" to see the rest of the world. They were pretty community-oriented. Were they more attached to the land, to their community than people outside the region? Colonel Taliaferro: "I suspect they are. Not broadly traveled or as well educated as most other parts of the country, I think. They are not really sophisticated, in other words." Then, after careful consideration: "It may have been associated with the aftermath of the Civil War, which left the South relatively impoverished for almost a century after the end of the war. A lot of people in this area, and a lot of historians obviously can see that more clearly, and I think it is true, it has been alleged the South has been bringing up the rear for the rest of the country for a long time."

Having narrowly missed World War II, and being a veteran of both the Korean War and what he himself refers to as the Vietnamese War, colonel Taliaferro's comments on America's involvement in Vietnam, both politically, and militarily, are based on long experience in the United States Air Force and on a close observance of Washington politics. His highly perceptive and wide-ranging views, based also on his being well-read, concur with those of the majority of interviewees, civilians as well as veterans, as regards his condemnation of the way the Vietnam War was conducted. His comments on official U.S. policy in Vietnam stand out in being more outspoken, more scathing, perhaps, than anything said by any of the other interviewees. Colonel Taliaferro has an unusually independent mind and because of that his observations on the South are particularly interesting. Although a Southerner himself, he spent most of his professional life outside his native region, only to return after his retirement from active service. This makes him an observer with a close enough attachment to the region to judge well; at the same time his long absence has created a certain distance, enough at any rate to take a

detached look at the South and its population. His Southern identity, though, clearly appears from his reference to the conflict that transformed his native region as "the tragic War Between the States". Like other interviewees before him, colonel Taliaferro points to the close affinity between Southerners and the military, and to the poverty and lack of sophistication in the South as a result of the Civil War.

4. *FINDINGS*

I

The uniqueness of the culture of the American South does not mean that it is not an integral part of the United States of America. This may explain why my closing remarks will deal, first of all, with the wider impact of the War in Vietnam on the American nation, before I come to a more detailed review of what my research has revealed about the meaning of the war in America's Southern region as a whole, and in Brownsville and Haywood County, Tennessee, in particular.

The long shadow cast by the War in Vietnam over the political consciousness of the United States of America remains visible even if the elder president Bush declared that victory in the first Gulf War erased the Vietnam syndrome. The lasting effect of the war in Southeast Asia on U.S. foreign policy was demonstrated when the same president, in marked contrast to president Johnson in the case of the Vietnam War, sought the support of the American people before embarking on hostile action against Iraq in 1991. Similarly, the deployment of the National Guard in the first Gulf War, involving as it did a large number of men from one particular area, sent a clear signal to the nation that one of the basic lessons of the Vietnam War had registered with the American government. President Johnson had made a mistake in not building a consensus on the war; by ordering the National Guard to the Persion Gulf the elder president Bush demonstrated that he was not going to repeat that mistake. It is obvious that when an American president calls up the National Guard, he knows that many men from one particular area will serve, which will have an impact on a large community, and also, that that will draw the attention of the media.

That the war has stayed in the memory of the American people was illustrated by numerous letters to the editors of national newspapers in the nineties. From the time Clinton sought office to the days of the Bosnia intervention in 1995, his draft-dodging history worked against him. Nor did Americans live down the memory of seeing their soldiers killed in Vietnam, with the pictures of the victims of that war arriving home in body bags. Inevitably, whenever the U.S. government considers foreign intervention, the experience of the Vietnam War plays a part in its political considerations.

Major studies by scholars as well as intriguing memoirs of the leading political and military figures continue to be published. The long list of publications on the war and its aftermath is extended every year. Robert McNamara's *In Retrospect: The Tragedy and Lessons of Vietnam* (1995) and Henry Kissinger's *Vietnam: A Personal History of America's Involvement in and Extrication from the Vietnam War* (2002) constitute revealing documents of the self-searching process.

II

The present volume is a study of the enduring influence of the War in Vietnam on the Southern region, more specifically on the West Tennessee community of Brownsville and Haywood County. The contents of the forty-nine interviews I conducted in 1995 and 1996 with black and white citizens in this Southern community have enabled me to construe a modest but pertinent oral history of the Vietnam War era from the point of view of a rural community in West Tennessee. I have done so along the lines set out by Donald A. Ritchie, in his *Doing Oral History*.

Beyond my analysis of the interviews, which are selectively reproduced in chapter 3, I have found the local newspaper a useful source for my examination. I have studied the relevant issues of the *Brownsville States-Graphic* (1960-1973).

The prominent subjects which emerged were the draft and deferments, reactions in the community to the deaths of soldiers, the student protests and anti-war demonstrations, the domino theory, the ARVN, the controversy surrounding the question whether America could have won the war, the extent to which the Vietnam War affected people's individual lives in the West Tennessee community, particularly when it came to the influence of the past on the present. The Civil War turned out still to be the dominant point of reference. The treatment of the Vietnam veterans when they came home was an important theme. Finally, questions were raised about the impact of the Vietnam war movies.

The Vietnam War draft was a controversial and divisive issue from the start across the nation. The system of exemption for college students and others was perceived as basically unfair. The poor and the uneducated, the young men who could not get into college or once in college failed their exams, the draftees who could not find support from powerful local politicians, who could not afford to go to Canada, or employ conscientious-objector counselors or draft lawyers, all of these were the ones sent to Vietnam.

Many members of the Brownsville community found that for them the War in Vietnam was, at first, a distant war. What shocked the citizens and their families and friends into an awareness of the reality of the war was the draft. Local boys and men were to serve overseas, where they might run serious risks. Mrs. Martha Jane Williams (p.131) spoke for many in Brownsville when she stated that "the people who had the least to defend were the ones who were being marched off to war." A cynical comment made by another interviewee was that through the original draft, i.e. before the introduction of the lottery system at a later stage in the war, the government was safeguarding the nation's intellectual potential. ("The tragic part for me, and I was confronted with it first-hand, was seeing who it was that was fighting that war, and what was happening to them, because while maybe the country was thinking the government's thinking

was, we'll protect our best minds." C.T. Smith, p.185).

For some families the general unease surrounding the draft and the system of exemptions has continued to the present day. This is generally true for civilians rather than for veterans.

That the draft system was generally considered unfair and that class tensions were heightened by this is illustrated by Adam Land in the *Encyclopedia of the Vietnam War*. To explain the impact of the system, he offers the following statistics: of the 2,5 million U.S. army personnel in Vietnam, eighty percent were from working-class or poor backgrounds. He argues that the Selective Service system granted draft deferments to college students, who often succeeded in avoiding combat duty altogether. Land also points out that the National Guard served as a safe haven for the sons of well-connected families, and further explains the high percentage of poor and uneducated American servicemen in Vietnam by referring to Project 100,000, initiated by the American government, as a contributing factor. The project caused 354,000 poor and less-educated Americans to be drafted into the Vietnam War under the guise of a social welfare program (pp.556-57).

In several national studies on the Vietnam War, the inconsistent and arbitrary decisions of four thousand decentralized local draft boards are commented upon. Land discusses the national outcry over their operations. The draft boards charged with the execution of the government's policy were made up almost entirely of white middle-class veterans of World War II or Korean War vintage. In many cases they were unpaid volunteers without any formal training. Land criticizes the preferential treatment of the sons of wealthy and well-connected families. Draftees managed to avoid service by switching locales, filing appeals, or feigning illness. Draft counselors and attorneys succeeded in postponing or preventing the induction of anyone who could afford their fees, Land argues (p.494). Oliver North agrees: in *One More Mission: Oliver North Returns to Vietnam* (1993), he writes that the men who "lacked the right social and economic status fought the war for all of us".

Poor young men were drafted and served in Vietnam irrespective of race. They were much younger than the American soldiers who fought in earlier foreign wars, as several interviewees pointed out. The pertaining statistics are as follows: 5.3 percent of American servicemen who died in Vietnam were eighteen; 14.2 percent were nineteen; 24.2 percent were twenty.

Further criticism of the Selective Service system, responsible for the draft policy during the War in Vietnam, is related to the time near the end of the war when it became clear that race and class discrimination could be translated into casualty figures. Thus black Americans constituted eleven percent of the U.S. male draft age population, but thirty-one percent of combat troops in Vietnam and twenty-four percent of U.S. Army combat deaths before 1970 (p.494). Obviously, the statistics provided by Land indicate that the Vietnam War draft was a black draft.

In 1965 and early 1966 nearly twenty-five percent of U.S. troops killed in Vietnam were black, which, as we have seen, is more than twice the percentage of blacks in the population as a whole (p.17). What also matters in this connection is that many of these men were descended from families with strong traditions of military service. Thus Ben L. Wiley (black) of Brownsville, Tennessee, served in World War II, while his oldest son served in Vietnam (p.232).

In *Vietnam Shadows: The War, Its Ghosts, and Its Legacy* (pp.35-36), Arnold R. Isaacs compares the statistics of Harvard University for World War II and the Vietnam War. During the earlier war nearly 27,000 students, alumni, employees, and faculty members served in the armed forces, 691 of whom lost their lives. Two years after the end of World War II, 4,000 of Harvard's 5,300 undergraduates were veterans. In the Vietnam War nineteen Harvard alumni died in Southeast Asia, "fewer than were lost by many high schools in working-class neighborhoods". Isaacs quotes former Navy pilot and POW (and later U.S. Senator) John S. McCain who stated that America's elite left the fighting and dying to the less privileged, which in his view "was the greatest crime and injustice of the Vietnam War" (p.39). In the eyes of Isaacs, president Johnson's and defense secretary Robert McNamara's policies were crucial in causing millions of middle-class, better-educated young men to avoid the Vietnam draft (p.39).

For several reasons McNamara is singled out for severe criticism by Isaacs who refers to McNamara's *In Retrospect*, a memoir published nearly thirty years after the event, as a kind of "public expiation" for the former Defense Minister's role in the war. Isaacs condemns McNamara for his failure to mention Project 100,000 and the New Standards program in his book, and points out that the subject of the Vietnam-era draft is not even mentioned in McNamara's "400-page apologia". He blames McNamara's (and president Johnson's) Vietnam-draft policy for the presence in Vietnam of lieutenant William L. Calley (My Lai). He concludes that Calley was commanding an infantry platoon, because "too many of his more intelligent and capable contemporaries had found ways not to serve". This is also the view of Vietnam veteran and author James Webb, who says: "I think the people who went to those schools - Harvard, MIT, whatever - are collectively responsible for William Calley." (p.40)

Congressman Ed Jones rightly pointed out in his column in the *Brownsville States-Graphic* that whether a young man was drafted or not often depended on where he lived and the policy followed by his local draft board. This is put into further perspective by a letter from the director (Congressional and Public Affairs) of the Selective Service System, National Headquarters, in Arlington, Virginia. The letter stated that the board in Brownsville operated independently within the Selective Service Law.

The local practice, as the interviews with Dr. Ray Dixon and others

suggest, was that the members of the draft board would cast their individual votes to determine whether a draftee would go to Vietnam or not. The interviews confirm that the draft board in Brownsville was powerless against local families who had political clout and were ready to use it. As Martha Jane Williams said, "Most people went to school that had no intention of going to school at all and they would get an educational deferment or they would be required on the farm and this was the absurd thing: they hadn't worked a day of their lives on the farm and all of a sudden, they were needed on the farm." (p.130) Young men from wealthy families stood to benefit. In contrast there is the overrepresentation of local blacks in the Vietnam War despite the dwindling black population in the community. Between 1960 and 1970 Haywood County lost over eight thousand, predominantly black, people in an area where eighty percent of the population was black. The interviews show that the decrease could be explained in two different ways. One explanation is that it was connected with the racial unrest of the early 1960s, when many black families were evicted from their homes. The other is that many eligible young blacks were fleeing the county to avoid the draft.

Whereas many national studies on the war in Southeast Asia point out that basically it was the poor and uneducated who served in the Vietnam War, there are no major studies, either national or regional, that distinguish between poor blacks and poor whites. This view is confirmed by Edwin Moise, an authoritative historian of the Vietnam War, in recent correspondence with the author (October 2003).

From the interviews in this book it is clear that the designations "black" and "poor", certainly in Brownsville and Haywood County in rural West Tennessee, could be equated. There was a big rift anyway between the white and the black communities, as deferments were tied in with education. Throughout the 1960s, before integration, blacks in the area were not in a position where they had ways and means to participate in advanced education. The specific details bearing on the overrepresentation of local black servicemen in the Vietnam War mentioned in the interviews, create a more accurate picture of the past: apart from the disproportionate number of local blacks drafted into the war, the interviews reveal also that a relatively large number of local blacks was killed in Vietnam.

Many blacks have always argued that the local draft board showed a racial imbalance. While this was certainly true in Brownsville and Haywood County, Dr. Ray Dixon rightly pointed out that this was inevitable since eighty percent of the community was black at the start of the Vietnam War era (p.227). Moreover, Army recruiters have traditionally been successful in this poverty-stricken rural community. The number of black soldiers serving in Vietnam included a number of professional servicemen who joined the services to see the world, make a career, or get an education, but clearly, blacks from Brownsville and

Haywood County were overrepresented.

The people of Brownsville and Haywood County knew that the draft system was unfair, yet they had no sympathy for draft dodgers. Dr. Thomas D. Russell III commented (p.153), "We here did not hold those who were draft dodgers in very favorable light at all." Dr. George Moss, Jr., (p.168) said that in any discussion about draft dodgers, president Carter's name would come up because he pardoned the draft dodgers. ("He was pardoning people that we did not want him to pardon.")

In contrast to what appears to be the standard picture in national studies, the draft board in Brownsville did not exclusively consist of retired military men. Dr. Ray Dixon in fact was the only individual who belonged to this category. (He had served in the military for six years of active duty and six years of reserve duty). Dixon explained that Lionel Bond, a black man, and Lloyd Patton, a white postman, served on the board with him during the Vietnam War (e-mail message, 19 March 2003). There was a certain imbalance in the composition of the draft board, given the fact that the majority of the community was black. Typically, and ironically, my attempt to establish the factual situation remains partly unresolved due to the conflicting memories of two key interviewees on this point, and the lack of records at the courthouse. Earl Rice did not recall any blacks serving on the board, whereas Dr. Ray Dixon remembered one black man. From today's perspective, however, the board's composition was unfair, as it did not reflect the racial balance of the local population. The struggle for civil rights in Southern communities coincided with the Vietnam War and the draft. Given the problems of local emancipation, it seems a miracle that even one single black man served on the draft board.

The Vietnam veterans, almost without exception, were not concerned with the draft, let alone with its unfairness. What did trouble them, quite understandably, was the conduct of the war. They were all unhappy about the outcome, some because they thought the war had been winnable, others because they thought the war in retrospect unjust.

The draft was widely discussed, a fact confirmed by my findings in the interviews with Martha Jane Williams (p.130), Earl Rice (pp.132-34), Margaret Eddleman (pp.231-32), and others.

In a small-town community the editor of a local newspaper such as the *Brownsville States-Graphic* has to tread carefully if he wants to express an opinion about sensitive political and social issues. The draft was certainly such a delicate topic. By resorting to the use of cartoons, the paper skilfully avoided the need to mention individual cases. It stayed away from opinions that might upset the social fabric. Reverting to cartoons was an intelligent demonstration of brinkmanship.

The first cartoon (1966) shows an army truck, carrying soldiers. In a cloud of dust the truck is seen travelling to Vietnam, almost obliterating the following trucks from sight. By the roadside a member of the Reserves watches the trucks go by; he has by his side a Funland sign and a

set of golf clubs. Holding a tennis racket and sports clothes under his left arm, he is attempting to catch a ride in the opposite direction, away from Vietnam. Clearly, the *Brownsville States-Graphic* believed that the federal government's decision not to involve the Reserves in the Vietnam War, was wrong. Because of this the burden of the fighting fell heavily, and unfairly, on the shoulders of young soldiers barely out of high school. Again, a cartoon depicts a soldier (labelled "draftee") walking up a gradient, carrying two civilians on his shoulders, one sitting on top of the other. The man sitting directly on the soldier's shoulders is obviously a student while the other civilian (labelled "deferred") is a professional.

A third cartoon shows the interior of a studio where an artist is working on a sign bearing the legend "Get Out Of Vietnam". Completed signs read "Ban The Bomb", and "Drop The Draft". Two scruffy-looking students, labelled "State College" and "University", are seen watching the artist's progress. Both students have long beards, a sarcastic reference to the idea one had that the students tried to stay in college as long as possible. The cartoon plays on current anti-deferment sentiments.

One-third of the cartoons that appeared in the *Brownsville States-Graphic* during the Vietnam War, focused on the draft and deferments, clearly a popular theme among the paper's loyal and patriotic readers.

Twenty years after the end of the Vietnam War, in 1995 and 1996, interviewees generally showed no restraint in discussing the draft and what they now felt to have been its basic unfairness. Marceline Jacocks (p.145) remembered that a law was introduced that specified that those who were in the National Guard were exempt from serving in Vietnam. As a result she had some doubts about the patriotism of the many who joined the Guard. She also remembered with anger the political clout of the governor of Tennessee whose son joined the National Guard in Memphis, after he had been turned down in Nashville, where he belonged. Marceline Jacocks also remembered that she had someone in her beauty parlor who had to forego those political privileges. In a flood of tears this lady was phoning the state representative in Washington to ask for her son's deferment. The call had, of course, no effect.

III

Robert D. Schulzinger, in *A Time for War: The United States and Vietnam, 1941-1975*, argues that opposition to the war started slowly on university campuses in 1965. By 1968 the anti-war movement had developed in such a way that major universities were in constant turmoil over the war (p.226). In 1969 the presidents of seventy-nine colleges issued a public appeal for president Nixon to step up the timetable for the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Vietnam (p.280).

In *Vietnam Shadows*, Isaacs plays down the number of young Americans protesting the war, arguing that fewer than half of American campuses experienced any form of organized anti-war activity. A small

fraction of these anti-war demonstrators went to such extremes as adopting the rhetoric of anti-imperialist revolution and marching under Vietcong flags (p.46).

Adam Land, in the *Encyclopedia of the Vietnam War*, singles out 1965 as a pivotal year. It was then that student groups started to organize anti-war protests. Most vociferous, perhaps, were the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS). The anti-war movement gained momentum, obtaining increasing grass roots support, until in due time the movement was backed by many labor, professional, and religious groups (p.556).

In *Strange Ground: An Oral History of Americans in Vietnam, 1945-1975*, (p.389), Harry Maurer argues that Jane Fonda came to symbolize all the [anti-war] visitors to Vietnam, because of both "her fame and her extravagant gesture of posing for photographs at the controls of an anti-aircraft gun". A bitter condemnation of Jane Fonda came from a Vietnam War veteran: "The politicians should say, Okay, here's the enemy, you're the military, go and do it. But when I've got some civilian in the Pentagon telling me how to do a mission, or telling me that there's gunsites that we can't even hit, you know who's down there kissing their ass? Ramsay 'Dupe' Clark and Jane Fonda."

George C. Herring merely records, in *America's Longest War: The United States and Vietnam, 1950-1975*, that Jane Fonda was one of the "doves", which he calls "a vast, sprawling, heterogeneous and fractious group" (pp.170-71).

In July 1972 the actress broadcast an appeal over Hanoi radio in which she urged American pilots to stop bombing North Vietnam (*Encyclopedia of the Vietnam War*, p.196). Hanoi Jane, as she henceforth was called, in an obvious reference to the Shanghai Rose of WWII, urged American soldiers to stop fighting and go home. Richard Nixon complained (in *The Real War*, New York, 1980) that when Jane Fonda traveled to Hanoi in protest of the war, she was given massive, largely positive, American media coverage when she praised the treatment of the American prisoners of war, "who in fact were being subjected to the most barbaric and brutal torture by their North Vietnamese captors" (p.115).

Vietnam and the Southern Imagination, by Owen W. Gilman, Jr., is one of the few studies of student protests and anti-war demonstrations to distinguish between the South and the rest of the nation. According to him, in the South and on Southern university campuses student protests and anti-war demonstrations never reached the "cataclysmic proportions" that they did in the North and far West (Owen W. Gilman, Jr., in the *Encyclopedia of Southern Culture*, p.670).

In May 1970, at Jackson State College, Mississippi, "the protest against the war was conflated with protest about black rights in the South." An ugly scene developed when two black students were shot and killed by white policemen (p.95). Like Gilman, Schulzinger, in *A Time for War*, points out that opposition to the war in Vietnam became bound up with the civil rights movement (p.226).

Isaacs takes a slightly different view. He claims that the peace

movement did not have much to do with the civil rights movement in the South. "Even though the words 'Vietnam-and-civil-rights' would later be carelessly run together as a kind of shorthand caption for protest politics in the sixties, the two struggles remained quite separate" (pp.52-53): the 1960s civil rights movement started with sit-ins in segregated lunch counters very early in the 1960s and came to a climax before any significant Vietnam protests had begun (p.53).

In answer to questions about the Kent State riots, diverging views emerged more than twenty-five years later. Christy Smith still believed that the soldiers in the National Guard had been very nervous and that that was the reason why they fired rounds of live ammunition. Dr. Thomas D. Russell III and his wife Pamela, college students themselves at the time, disagreed with the violent protests of students. Pamela Russell felt that the students protesting at Kent State were "hippies, and crazy". Dr. Thomas D. Russell was convinced that the students were killed because they protested violently instead of peacefully (p.151). At Vanderbilt in Nashville protests did not amount to much (Dr. Tommy and Pamela Russell, p.151).

Franklin Smith was convinced that there were fewer protests on Southern campuses than in the rest of the country as a consequence of patriotism. He himself had been involved in anti-war protests at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville (p.148). Following the bloody incident at Kent State, students had marched from the university campus to downtown Knoxville. At Mississippi State, however, where he studied for another two years, there were no protests at all.

In Tennessee there were a few campus ministry groups that led some demonstrations in terms of Vietnam. Dr. Benny Hopper said that those protesting against the war were stereotyped as long-haired hippies (p.191).

Among individual anti-war protesters, Jane Fonda was heartily disliked by the people I interviewed. Some found Fonda "detestable" (Dr. Tommy and Pamela Russell, p.153). Dr. John Redding went so far as to accuse her of betraying her country (pp.211-12).

From a black perspective, anti-war protests in the area were virtually absent. On the campus of Lane College in Jackson, Tennessee, there were some quiet student protests, in keeping with the way anti-war demonstrations were organized on other Southern campuses. Blacks at Lane felt that they were overrepresented in the Vietnam War draft (Earl Rice, p.136).

Jeff Hooper resented the activities of the SDS, the student organization that was behind anti-war demonstrations on campuses nationwide (pp.158-59). Martha Hooper had only faint memories of the War in Vietnam, but she did remember the "long-haired students" protesting against the war and she disliked them greatly for it (p.172).

No demonstrations against the War in Vietnam were held in Brownsville, or in Haywood County (Laymon Johnson, p.170). But there

were protests in the South. In Memphis students marched, used the peace sign, and listened to the music of Peter, Paul, and Mary - "If I had a hammer" - , as Bob Moses remembered. He also said that many students from Memphis disappeared to Canada (p.199). In northern Florida, where Dr. John Redding taught history, there were noisy protests on campus (p.207). A student at Vanderbilt University at the time of the war, Patrick H. Mann, Jr., recalled anti-war demonstrations on campus, and, on a limited scale, students burning draft cards (p.222). Danny Presley was drafted, did not like it much, but went to Vietnam, because he wanted to do what was right, and in doing so showed evidence of the patriotism that appears to be characteristic of much of the South.

In the absence of local protests the *Brownsville States-Graphic* limited its coverage of anti-war activities.National protests against the War in Vietnam received ample attention on television and in the national press. The Kent State riots received one-sided attention in the local newspaper. Its editor in 1995-1996 explained that the attitude on Southern campuses generally was that "when your country called, you served" (p.188). While the war protesters saw the students killed at Kent State as heroes, Thurman Sensing, the newspaper columnist, considered them ". . . an ugly and brutal mob engaged in transforming a university into a scene of anarchy and bloodshed" (p.88).

In December 1965 a strongly-worded letter from a corporal in the Marines in Vietnam to *The Commercial Appeal* was taken over by the local paper. It echoed the thoughts and feelings of its readers in denouncing the anti-war demonstrators in America as the enemies of the soldiers in Vietnam.

North Callahan's column in the *Brownsville States-Graphic* of 11 June 1965 reflected the feelings of the local community: "Among students I have noticed that there is a considerable amount of sentiment against our fighting in Vietnam . . . Yet I note that most such arguments come from those who are eligible for the draft."

In 1969 the paper reported "good news" about the SDS. It was that the Louisiana State University Board of Supervisors effectively banned the SDS from all campuses within its university system. Moreover, it was being turned down by thirty-seven colleges and universities and twenty-five meeting halls, parks, and camps (p.87). SDS spokesmen were allowed to speak at Harvard and Yale, but the speaker at Harvard was removed from the platform for denouncing the United States of America. Thurman Sensing, in his column, argued that the Vietnam Moratorium (the stoppage of school and college classes) and what were called "Vietnik" demonstrations were not merely directed at immediate American withdrawal from Vietnam. He believed that the ultimate objective was the defeat and humiliation of the U.S. He provided no arguments for this, and, in fact, there was no need for them. The columnist of the local newspaper was in tune with his audience, and shared with them an instinctive mistrust of any individual or group of individuals who went against the American government.

IV

During the cold war years of the 1960s, when the communist witch-hunt of senator Joseph R. McCarthy was still having an impact, many Southerners, including the people of West Tennessee, believed that communism posed a worldwide threat. The domino theory was a hypothesis of global communist expansion, widely accepted by Americans, including presidents, politicians, and high-ranking officers in the armed forces. It constituted the driving force behind American foreign policy. In *Dereliction of Duty: Lyndon Johnson, Robert McNamara, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Lies That Led to Vietnam*, H. R. McMaster argues that in 1952 president Truman's National Security Council (NSC), in the wake of what the French referred to as the dirty war in Indochina, put forward the suggestion that if any of the countries of Southeast Asia were lost to communism, this would have serious consequences. American foreign policy, as McMaster points out, aimed at preventing countries from "passing into the communist orbit, and to assist them to develop will and ability to resist communism from within and without" (p.34). This, McMaster argues, was the first clear description of the domino theory.

Similarly, George McTurnan Kahin and John W. Lewis, in *The United States in Vietnam*, argue that in 1954 the State Department did not like the terms of the ceasefire agreement concluded between the Vietminh and the French. Kahin and Lewis add that a year before Washington had referred to the effect on Southeast Asia of the possible fall of Indochina as "a row of dominoes" (p.58). The American government believed that the Geneva Agreements would unbalance the first domino, according to the authors.

General Maxwell Taylor, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), advised president Kennedy to increase American military involvement, saying: '"If Vietnam goes, it will be exceedingly difficult, if not impossible, to hold Southeast Asia."' (Kelly Evans-Pfeifer in the *Encyclopedia of the Vietnam War*, p.177) In 1956 then senator Kennedy had said much the same thing in a speech: "Vietnam represents the cornerstone of the Free World in Southeast Asia, the keystone in the arch, the finger in the dike. Burma, Thailand, India, Japan, the Philippines, and obviously Laos and Cambodia are among those whose security would be threatened if the Red Tide of Communism overflowed into Vietnam" (Richard Reeves, *President Kennedy: Profile of Power*, p.254). A National Security Council (NSC) working paper prepared by Dean Rusk and Robert McNamara, stated that the fall of South Vietnam to communism would lead to a rapid further expansion of communism to the rest of mainland Southeast Asia and Indonesia (p.258).

Observations made by interviewees varied. Vietnam was seen as one of the major dominoes in the domino theory (Dr. Thomas D. Russell III,

p.150). America should stop the spread of communism at some point, and Vietnam was the right place to do it (Dr. George Moss, p.164). While the domino theory as such was accepted, it was thought that president Kennedy made a mistake when he sent advisers to Vietnam (C. Thomas Hooper III, p.174). The domino theory left colonel Taliaferro frustrated: on the one hand he could not really find anything wrong with the concept, but, on the other, he felt that it was wrong to support what he called imperial living, which was one of the consequences of America's involvement in Vietnam.

V

The American perception of the role of its ally, the ARVN (the army of the Republic of Vietnam), is an important aspect of the Vietnam War. In *America's Longest War: The United States and Vietnam, 1950-1975*, George C. Herring cites desertion and unwillingness to fight as a chronic problem: "Even the better ARVN units repeatedly manifested an unwillingness to engage the enemy in sustained combat." (p.233) The situation looked so grim that in the spring of 1964 the ARVN was on the verge of disintegration. Fifty percent of ARVN draftees in training centers deserted (p.136). David Halberstam of the *New York Times* and Neil Sheehan of United Press International argued that the ARVN was conducting office-hours warfare, "launching perfunctory operations during the day and returning to its bases in the evening" (p.92).

Herring offers a detailed description of the problems frustrating successful joint American-ARVN operations in Vietnam. The chronic security leaks were a very grave matter. The Vietcong had infiltrated the top ranks of the ARVN. Consequently, American officers were compelled to keep from their Vietnamese counterparts details of major military operations (p.163). This altogether negative view of the ARVN is echoed in *Major Problems in the History of the Vietnam War*, edited by Robert J. McMahon, which contains an American serviceman's view of the South Vietnamese army. The American soldier explains that he was with Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV) as an adviser and as such worked with three different ARVN battalions. For security reasons he stayed with the battalion commander every night. "We had personal bodyguards and the reason was that a good percentage of the guys in the ranks were VC or even North Vietnamese. The bodyguards were to protect us against getting blown away by the guys we were fighting with." (pp.408-09)

George McTurnan Kahin and John W. Lewis, in *The United States in Vietnam*, argue that whenever South Vietnamese forces followed in the wake of American firepower, they were as a rule ineffective in their clearing operations. The majority of ARVN units refrained from what is called active patrolling. The South Vietnamese army's pusillanimous warfare benefitted enemy units, the authors explain; they also point out

that the ARVN's posture was generally defensive and that ARVN units lived off the rural population, acting more like "conquerors of an alien people" than as their friendly protectors (p.363). At best the ARVN refrained from fighting, or they ran away from a fight or they were seen as a security risk. This is the view taken by an American soldier in Harry Maurer's *Strange Ground: An Oral History of Americans in Vietnam, 1945-1975*. The soldier describes an ambush in a rice paddy where the Americans called in naval support fire. They brought in Hueys [helicopters] and Phantoms [fighters], firing rockets and dropping bombs. While this was going on ARVN soldiers dropped their gear, "hightailing it out the other way". The soldier remembered people shooting at them (p.151). The perception of ARVN soldiers as unreliable is also mentioned in Robert J. Lifton's *Home from the War: Learning from Vietnam Veterans*. South Vietnamese troops, as one American serviceman recalls, seemed to be laying around doing nothing, causing the men to wonder, "Why should I fight for them?" (p.45) Another American soldier remembers ARVN forces who refused to take risks and did not fight very well, while Americans sent to help them did the fighting and dying (pp.194-95). All comments in academic research on the role of the ARVN in the Vietnam War are negative in tone, and every expert in the field is convinced that the South Vietnamese army was an unreliable ally in the war.

My findings on the basis of the interview with Danny Presley confirm that the ARVN was an unreliable ally (p.259). A lack of fighting spirit marked the ARVN, according to national studies. What my findings add to these is that the U.S. Army made use of "Kit Carson" scouts. These were former Vietcong, who had surrendered and had started working for the Americans. The "Kit Carson" scouts claimed that half of the South Vietnamese army was Vietcong, and, consequently, they treated the ARVN in a hostile manner (p.259).

All sources, then, concur that the ARVN could not be relied upon, and was, moreover, much despised by the American soldiers that came into contact with it.

VI

To the question whether America could have won the Vietnam War many controversial answers have been given. Academic research has revealed much that went wrong politically and strategically. General studies have shown that many Americans believed that the restrictions placed on the armed services by political leaders prevented America from winning the war. Soldiers in the field believed that their hands had been tied. In *Vietnam Shadows*, Arnold R. Isaacs refers to the frustration of professional soldiers who did not understand why America failed to win the war. Isaacs argues that many officers concluded that their civilian superiors had "disregarded military realities and thrown away an

attainable victory by imposing unnecessary and ultimately crippling restraints on their soldiers." (pp.68-69)

The military were not allowed a free hand, George C. Herring argues in *America's Longest War: The United States and Vietnam, 1950-1975*. He brings in general Westmoreland as one of those who blamed the ill-considered policy of graduated response, which the military were forced to accept from Washington. Robert J. McMahon too, in the *Encyclopedia of the Vietnam War*, adds that the former secretary of state Dean Rusk blamed the lack of solidarity on the home front for the loss of the war (p.485).

What went wrong in Vietnam? In *On Strategy: A Critical Analysis of the Vietnam War*, colonel Harry G. Summers, Jr., provides some answers. First of all, the American government failed to specify an objective, and thus violated the chief principle of war. It did not determine precisely what it wanted to achieve with the use of military force (p.186). Secondly, he blames faulty arithmetic and a lack of strategic thinking on the part of the government (p.182), which opted for a strategic defensive or containment rather than the strategic offensive characterized by maintaining initiative and freedom of action in the face of the enemy (p.187).

It has been my experience that many interviewees harbored strong feelings about America losing the Vietnam War. What transpires from the interviews about this aspect of the war is that many, but certainly not all members of the local community of Brownsville and Haywood County, agree that the reason why America lost the war was that the military were fighting with one hand tied behind their back. (Cf. pp.154, 162, 176, 191, 195, 197, 246-48, 269, 272, 279, 283-85)

First, I will focus on the civilians' point of view. Earl Rice knew that the American government was not trying to win the war (p.133). Dr. George Moss, Jr., argued that America had not tried hard enough, but that it could have won the war. America was not allowed to win the War in Vietnam (pp.166-67). C. Thomas Hooper III blamed the American government for not allowing the men fighting in Vietnam to win the war ("America would not unleash its arsenal", p.176). Dr. Benny Hopper perceived the Vietnam War as a war that America was not allowed to win ("you were fighting with one hand tied behind your back", p.191). Bob Moses failed to understand why the government failed to see that it was repeating the mistakes America had made in the Korean War. It was obvious to him that "Dean Rusk, Lyndon Johnson, and McNamara did not want to win the war". (p.199). Moses was convinced that it was because they were afraid of the Chinese, and that the South realized more slowly than the rest of the country that the U.S. were not winning the war. Moses thought that the South felt betrayed by its own government.

The local veterans who were deployed in the war represented all the armed services. Tom Silvia was stationed in Guam, and Fox Smith in Japan. Because of their widely different ranks and responsibilities their personal accounts and views constitute a quite diverse perspective on the

Vietnam War. Fox Smith is the only one who volunteered for service; Webb Banks and Russell Taliaferro were career officers; Larry Banks was sent to Vietnam while fulfilling his obligation following ROTC; Arthur Ellis, Danny Presley, and Bill Lea were drafted into the service (Arthur Ellis purposely steered a course that would inevitably lead to Vietnam, though). All but one of the veterans were officers, two of them even high-ranking career officers. There is no evidence to suggest that the individual perceptions of the war could be connected with rank or position. An apt comparison can be made between Larry Banks (Army) and Webb Banks (Air Force) who held similar positions in logistics. While Larry was convinced that America could not have won the war, Webb argued that North Vietnam could have been defeated very easily. All remaining veterans, including all the men drafted into the service, agreed that America could have won the war.

What mattered to them more than anything else was that America had lost. This was hard to accept, because basing themselves on their experience in the theater of war they claimed they knew that America could have won if it had wanted to. Yet, two veterans held opposing views. One, colonel Russell Taliaferro, was a high-ranking officer in the US Air Force. In Vietnam he was an advisor to the Vietnamese Air Force. He explained that he disagreed with US policy and that his actual war experience had only served to increase the negative feelings that he already had when he arrived in Vietnam. The other, Larry Banks, was a logistics officer in the Army in a forward base camp. He held a different opinion at the time of the interview. In retrospect he considered the Vietnam War an unwinnable war (p.253). It may be said of all veterans that their actual war experience added a voice of authority to their comments.

Referring to the eleven-day war of December 1972, when North Vietnam was heavily bombed ("bombed into oblivion", p.247), B-52 navigator Tom Silvia convincingly argued that America could have won the war. Danny Presley, who was deployed in a patrol unit in the area between Cambodia and Saigon, never doubted that America could have won the War in Vietnam. Major Webb Banks was a logistics officer in the Air Force at Phu Cat; he was convinced that America could have won the war ("We could have closed North Vietnam down in two weeks", p.268). Bill Lea served with the First Marine Division; it was clear to him that the Americans fighting in Vietnam were not allowed to win the war (p.272). Fox Smith, who served in the Navy during the Vietnam War, blamed president Johnson's handling of the war and Washington politics for America's failure to be victorious (pp.274-75). Smith claimed that the basic mistake was that the Armed Services had not been allowed to fight the war along military lines.

On the basis of the political proceedings at the time, particularly the Fulbright Committee Hearings (1966), colonel Russell Taliaferro, even before he went to Southeast Asia, thought that in Vietnam the United

States were engaged in something that they could not win. He thought that the cause was wrong, and also felt that president Johnson and general Westmoreland "ran the wrong war" (p.284), and explained why. "We should never get in a war that we are not determined to go all out on." Colonel Taliaferro claimed that America could have bombed and defeated North Vietnam.

It seems to me that in Vietnam, America was engaged in what is called in the interviews a political war. In effect this signifies that it was US policy to attempt to contain communism at the seventeenth parallel, and that the United States were not making a maximum effort to defeat the North Vietnamese or to conquer any area north of the seventeenth parallel.

As I have argued before, the interviews conducted in the area researched construct a more diverse and accurate portrait of the past than existing secondary literature does on the controversy surrounding the question whether America could have won the war. There were those in this part of West Tennessee who were convinced that they were "deceived by the military only in that they were not being allowed to win". America, as Dr. George Moss, Jr., pointed out, could have won the war by completely destroying the internal fabric of the country, the rice field dikes, and the ports (p.167). Dr. Benny Hopper emphasized the anger and the frustration experienced by the Southerners he knew, and claimed that many of them felt like the Vietnam soldiers: they felt betrayed by their country and by their government. (p.194). Some interviewees failed to comprehend why a powerful nation like America could not conquer some of the enemy's territory. "What president Johnson failed to say is that the United States will move with determination to win a victory over the forces of communism that are taking so many American lives . . . . " (*Brownsville States-Graphic*, February 1968).

Many area residents sensed that presidents Johnson and Nixon did not want to win the war, partly arriving at this conclusion because America was not seen to use its full arsenal of weapons. It was pointed out in the interviews that this was because the government was afraid of the Chinese response, if any. (p.197; p.227). According to some the idea that the United States could not win the Vietnam War was a myth. They accounted for it by pointing out that the myth had developed because America was making grave strategic mistakes, and mentioned that American planes bombed the jungle of South Vietnam, instead of hitting and eliminating targets north of the seventeenth parallel. The opportunity to effectively bomb enemy territory arrived in December 1972, when America bombed North Vietnam "into oblivion" (p.247). North Vietnam had nothing left to make war with and America had the ability at the end of the so-called eleven-day war to fly anywhere in Vietnam with impunity. As a result, as Webb Banks put it concisely, America could have closed North Vietnam down in two weeks by destroying four or five power generators (p.268).

There are area residents who remain convinced that the United

States could not have gained control of Vietnam, because the enemy was fighting underground (p.176). The Fulbright Committee Hearings on the Vietnam War made it plain that America was engaged in something it could not win (p.253). Bombing the jungle of South Vietnam, even though this was done in an effort to destroy the Ho Chi Minh trail, created the idea that American involvement in Vietnam was a wasted effort. McNamara's war of statistics which meant that fighters and bombers were flying sorties with insignificant loads in order to keep the sortie rate up, had the same effect (p.285). Certainly from a military point of view the American war effort was lacking in focus.

VII

Initially, the presence of this foreign war made itself felt through the draft. Many people, thirty years later, remembered the division in the white community. Most were bitter about how helpless they were, particularly when they saw that the more privileged members of the community were able to keep their sons out of the war. (Cf. interviews with Martha Jane Williams, p.131, Marceline Jacocks, p.145, and Margaret Eddleman, p.231). Twenty years after the Vietnam War ended the Johnston family were still attempting to obtain a posthumous Purple Heart medal for their son. An even larger division showed between the white and the black community. In rural West Tennessee the Vietnam War draft could not but be a black draft: eighty percent of the population was black. A larger division in the community showed itself: many eligible young blacks left the community in order to avoid the draft, never to return (Dr. Ray Dixon, p.227). The observation made by Mary Ann Shaw that the Vietnam War era was a time when the local community was still segregated and that for that reason she did not know exactly how many blacks had been killed in the war, puts the impact of the Vietnam War on the local community into further perspective. It is odd though to reflect that because blacks and whites were still separated along color lines at the time, the two groups were sometimes unaware of one another's tragedies.

The South received its veterans well. It strongly disapproved of the lack of respect outside the Southern region for the returning Vietnam veterans. This was a blot on the country, Martha Jane Williams said (p.131). The attitude shown towards the veterans constitutes an aspect of the War in Vietnam that shows a rift between the South and the rest of the United States.

From a political point of view, a consequence locally of America's involvement in Vietnam was the shift from Democrat to Republican among conservative white voters. This change of allegiance had in fact set in when John F. Kennedy was running for office. Many local whites favored the Republican senator Barry Goldwater. President Johnson's liberal policies did not improve matters for them. Very nearly thirty years

later Tommy Hooper, whose family had always voted Democrat, commented, " . . . I was seeing what president Johnson had done to our country by getting us involved in that Vietnam War . . . Kennedy was the first one that got us into it. And those two Democrat presidents got us so involved that we couldn't get ourselves out" (p.174). Interestingly, Hooper emphasized that both presidents were Democrats, suggesting that a Republican would not have got America into such a quagmire. Marceline Jacocks, too, pointed out that it was the Republican president Richard Nixon who ended the War in Vietnam (p.146).

For many members of the local community the distant past still looms larger than the recent past or the present. Frequently, an attempt on my part to discuss the War in Vietnam with a local resident, triggered off a discussion of the Civil War. Lynn Shaw explained, "Of course, I think the major war, the war that had so many more casualties than all the other wars, was the War Between the States" (p.161). And the idea of loss connected with the Vietnam War made Dr. George Moss, Jr., say, "We in the South did lose a war one time . . . and we in the South still relive the Civil War . . . We were out there [in Vietnam] to win this thing because we were not going to lose" (p.165). Obviously, in Brownsville and Haywood County, Tennessee, the historically distant War Between the States for some still mattered a great deal more than the geographically distant war in Southeast Asia. For many the Civil War is still the point of reference. As the interviews show, twenty years after the Vietnam War ended people in general remembered just a few names of local servicemen killed in it. Marceline Jacocks, the owner of the beauty parlor during the Vietnam era, remembered that Larry Land and Danny Overton were killed. Jacob Bond, a high school teacher, remembered that a friend down the street was killed, and Lynn Shaw remembered the Vietnam War as the war in which his best friend, Norman Lane, was killed. The latter had gone to Vietnam as a volunteer, and had been killed during the Tet offensive. His was the name most frequently remembered by interviewees. Another death that many remembered was that of Rick Johnston, another volunteer, whose helicopter had crashed on the Cambodian border. Martha Hooper also remembered "a Lovelace boy", and her husband, C. Thomas Hooper III, remembered the death in Vietnam of Marian and Elizabeth's grandson, Norman Lane, and Sonny Land's son Larry. He also knew that the Johnston family lost a son [Rick]. Leon King remembered that a young man called Butler was killed in Vietnam, and Dr. Ray Dixon remembered that they had lost three men that he knew of in the county and that these were white men. Of two black men, also killed, he knew the names, Taylor and Foster. Of the white men he said that he did not know Marshall Canada, but that he did know Larry Land and Norman Lane (p.228).

The impact of the war on the community is also apparent in the *Brownsville States-Graphic*, the local newspaper. In September 1962 the local newspaper printed a graphic account of the experiences of lieutenant William Arthur Rose. Lt. Rose was a helicopter pilot who ferried troops

into battle zones in the Mekong Delta and near the Cambodian border. The article made it clear that American servicemen, officially in Vietnam as advisors, were militarily involved.

That the local newspaper functioned as the community's bulletin board showed in its systematic reporting on local servicemen in connection with Vietnam. A special "With Our Servicemen" column was published between 11 August 1967 and 17 December 1971. It comprised news items about local servicemen received from military sources.

The data include details as to where and when and under what circumstances the (eighteen) men perished, and as such constitute a useful source of information. Other available sources give lower figures and are thus less reliable. (The Veterans Memorial List - Appendix III - compiled by VFW Post 4838 lists thirteen war-related deaths; lists of casualties provided by military sources indicate names and pertaining information arranged by individual branch of the Armed Services. Deaths from hostile action: Army 2; Marine Corps 6. Deaths resulting from other causes: Army 3; Marine Corps 1). I passed on the names of the local servicemen killed in Vietnam, as I had found them in the local newspaper, to the VFW. The names recorded on the War Monument in front of the courthouse, unveiled in the late 1990s, may still be incomplete or incorrect, as my observations on available sources indicate.

In the worst year of the Vietnam War (1968), as the paper reported, six servicemen were killed in Vietnam; this figure represented one third of the total number of men from the community killed in Vietnam.

An editorial published in the *Brownsville States-Graphic* in May 1968, elaborated on the impact of the Vietnam War in West Tennessee, and focused on the awards ceremony for a local soldier. The parents of the soldier killed in Vietnam were presented with the Purple Heart and Bronze Star Medal with "V". The editorial demonstrated the Southern attitude to the Vietnam War and the soldiers who served in it. The Vietnam War was a useless war, but Southerners were a little more patriotic than the rest of the country and supported the military despite serious doubts as to the justification of America's involvement in Vietnam. The editorial read, "Now, Billy, and the thousands of others who will not return from Southeast Asia have only an intangible uncertainty as to why they were there. They only knew that their country called. They went. They died. They are honored." This summed it up in a nutshell. For a Southerner, whatever his hesitations about the use of the war, pride and honor are key words (see also interviews with Gordon Perry, Bob Moses, Danny Presley, and Dr. Thomas D. Russell III).

In a column written by Ed Jones in July 1971, this Representative of the 8th District of Tennessee (D) claimed that it was not necessary for Southerners "to endorse Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon's foreign policy to appreciate the efforts of the fighting men." The Congressman urged the people of West Tennessee "to seek out our boys who have served in Vietnam and let them know that we understand and

appreciate the sacrifices they have made." Jones, then, distinguished between official US policy and the patriotism and loyalty of the servicemen sent to fight in Vietnam. Southerners feel comfortable with this view to the present day.

VIII

Was a Southern perspective of the Vietnam War colored at all by the legacy of the Civil War?

The entry that Owen W. Gilman, Jr., wrote for the *Encyclopedia of Southern Culture* on the Vietnam War was simply called "The Vietnam War" (pp.670-71), but, and this is an indication of his mindset, it was originally conceived and written as an essay entitled "Vietnam and the South", as he pointed out in a more recent study on the same subject (*Vietnam and the Southern Imagination*). Significantly, the thesis statement in this later work indicates that Gilman aimed to show how the Vietnam War was fitted into "the larger history that is always present for Southerners" (p.8). He argues that Southern writers seem to have accepted the paradigm of necessity for the past as it is shown in Allen Tate's "Ode to the Confederate Dead". Consequently, Gilman argues, the Southern writer does not approach Vietnam as an anomaly. Southerners are aware that Vietnam is part of a "deeper time": the Vietnam War has "a prior analogue already lodged in the nation's past" (p.15). *Vietnam and the Southern Imagination* shows Southern writers preoccupied with placing the experience in the context of their region (p.20). Gilman saw that the historical consciousness seen by Donald Davidson as a natural part of Southern life, has endured and found its way into the Southern writer's representation of Vietnam (p.21).

In *Vietnam and the Southern Imagination*, Gilman writes that in the South, ever since the Civil War, serving one's country in war has always been considered the honorable thing to do, and that country had become the United States (p.25). Another point connecting the Civil War and the War in Vietnam is remembrance. Gilman argues that this was very well illustrated by Bobbie Ann Mason's novel *In Country* (1985), which he called "a paean to remembrance". Knowledge carried to the heart depends upon the sustenance of memory, he reminds us. One of Mason's achievements in the novel, Gilman writes, is that she brought the past into the main character's consciousness through a response to physical sensations "so that the past was not so much understood as felt" (pp.49-50).

The novel cited in Gilman's work as the perfect illustration of continuity, is Clyde Edgerton's *The Floatplane Notebooks* (1988). It does not focus on the Vietnam War. Instead, the book highlights the life on the land of one family, the Copelands, over a prolonged period of time, including Vietnam combat. The Copelands value traditions such as the annual visit to the family graveyard. In his analysis of one such visit,

Gilman argues: "a natural illumination to life comes to those who manage . . . to keep track of the past, to know where the dead are buried, and to keep that place well preserved" (p.73). Gilman observes that it was the wisteria vine growing beside the graveyard that was Edgerton's ultimate means of placing Vietnam in time. The vine was planted long ago by an ancestor when the family settled in North Carolina. The vine was there during the Civil War, when soldiers in blue plundered the farm. "With the vine, it was all there - the loss of a child at birth, the misery of the Civil War catastrophe . . . [and] a Department of Defense telegram reporting the unfortunate result of a hostile action on the other side of the globe." (p.74) Gilman argues that the element of time in the novel is handled in such a way that the final impression on the reader when the effect of the Vietnam War on the Copeland family is mentioned, is one of "timeless time". Within that construct Vietnam fits in with other "sad stories" (p.74).

Barry Hannah's *Ray* (1980), Gilman suggests, is inspired by Vietnam, but even more by the Civil War, notably the charges led by general Jeb Stuart. The importance of the Southerner's innate sense of history is emphasized in section XX, where Hannah describes a Southern victory in battle: "Everybody was killed. One Union private lived to tell the story. If warriors had known this story, we would have taken the war to the gooks with more dignity." (p.66) Gilman argues that what Hannah is saying here is that all that America lacked in Vietnam was a little history (p.91). Ultimately, Gilman's book examines a number of patterns "for linking Vietnam to the long chronicle of history in the South" (p.184).

Ruth D. Weston in *Barry Hannah: Postmodern Romantic*, finds that Hannah's fiction reflects the complications of the South's defeat in the Civil War. She points out that nearly all of his stories are informed by war, especially the Civil War and Vietnam, which often merge in the minds of his characters (p.3). Hannah's fiction describes the Vietnam War as embedded in the long history of the South and its "lost cause in the Civil War: as a contemporary manifestation of Southern traditions of violence, honor, and dishonor" (p.44).

The scope of the impact of the Civil War emerges from the interview with Dr. Tommy Russell III and his wife Pamela: "I did notice that you said Southerners were used to defeat and I disagree with that. We are merely sadly acquainted with defeat; we are not used to it. We do not accept it very well." (p.150) Feelings on the Vietnam War in the South are different from those in the rest of the United States. The South feels different about country and is more patriotic. It feels different about war, because it lost the Civil War. (". . . and we in the South still relive the Civil War, which the rest of the country does not . . .", Dr. George Moss, Jr., p.165). The full extent to which the Southern perspective on the Vietnam War is colored by the living memory of the Civil War, is made visible by Tom Silvia, the Southerner who grew up in Connecticut. His detached view was that there were still many people in the South that

wish that they had won the Civil War. He explained the living presence of this war thus: "A lot of people still live the Civil War . . . because they lost" (pp.249-50).

The interviews demonstrate the unique sense of history and continuity commonly found in the South and reflected in academic research and Vietnam War fiction. The interviews demonstrate that the Southern community of Brownsville and Haywood County takes an all-encompassing view of history. If the Civil War was hardly ever evoked in discussions with Vietnam veterans, the interviews with the civilians of the community were different. Frequently, there was no need for the interviewer to mention the Civil War. The leap into the past appeared to come entirely natural to the civilian interviewees and seemed an integral part of the mind of the South, as the interviews, especially those with Harbert Thornton, Jr., (pp.139-41), and Dr. John Redding (pp.210-12), show: Vietnam era deferments to them suggested the (Union) Civil War custom, even in details such as the custom of hiring someone to do the fighting for another person in lieu of a sum of money.

In the memory of Margaret Kizer the Civil War dwarfed the War in Vietnam. The construction of a new monument in Vicksburg, Mississippi, meant much more to her than Vietnam ("that really makes you want to go back and read more about the Civil War", p.142). Lynn Shaw, similarly, made some preliminary remarks on the Vietnam War, then went on to talk about the War Between the States ("the war that had so many more casualties than all the other wars", p.161). For some interviewees the Vietnam War was not even a subject they wanted to discuss. For them the only thing that matterned was their Southernness. Their point of reference was the Civil War, as the interviews with Reese Moses (pp.201-09), and Ned Rooks (pp.213-216) amply demonstrate.

During the Vietnam era, the *Brownsville States-Graphic* also helped to keep the memory of the Civil War alive. Field trips to the site of the battle of Shiloh (Tennessee), organized by the area schools, celebrations of the Civil War centenary, and the birthday of general Lee, were reported in the paper. Detailed descriptions of the antebellum homes of the community, stories about the battle of Brownsville, and a small skirmish, both from the Civil War, appeared in the local newspaper in the 1960s. Every year the paper reported re-enactments of Civil War battles (at Shiloh and Corinth, Mississippi), in which members of the local community participated. It printed a wide range of articles about the Civil War. In 1961 the Civil War centennial was the most important event locally and regionally. Throughout the Vietnam War era the paper published reviews of books on the Civil War acquired by the Brownsville library.

IX

The basically hostile attitude manifested generally in most American regions beyond the South towards the servicemen returning from Vietnam, has been dealt with extensively in national studies on the Vietnam War. George C. Herring, *America's Longest War* (pp.274-75), and Arnold R. Isaacs, *Vietnam Shadows* (pp.9-34), both major studies on the War in Vietnam, have insightful comments on the subject.

My interviews show that the veterans of the local West Tennessee community were treated warmly and with respect. Clearly the local community here stood for the entire Southern region. "There was no badmouthing them", Lynn Shaw remembered (p.162). The local servicemen who returned from Vietnam were treated with dignity and praise, according to C. Thomas Hooper III (p.176). Veteran of the Korean War Bob Moses likewise remembered that nobody was hostile to the returning soldiers.

Leon King was embittered about the returning Vietnam veterans not getting a job ("And they put their life on the line!", p.181). Christy Smith remembered seeing wounded and disabled soldiers in Japan.

A Vietnam veteran himself, Tom Silvia was moved by the Vietnam War monument in Washington. He said that the monument "purged a whole lot of ill feeling" (p.251). The monument had a healing effect and was a kind of catharsis. Vietnam veteran Bil Lea emphasized the difference between the older generation of veterans, mostly belonging to the VFW, and veterans like himself. The VFW generation had the parades, and, as he put it, "we were considered the guys that went and fought the no-name war. We did not win, we just went over there and came back" (p.275).

Some of the warmth and respect extended to the community's returning veterans of the Vietnam War and mentioned in the interviews, also found its way into the *Brownsville States-Graphic*. In January 1968 the paper printed an article about corporal Mike Turner. It included a reference to his parents, who had been anxiously waiting for his phone call, so that when it came they could immediately drive down to the airport in Memphis to meet him.

X

The transformational blend of U.S. Vietnam War policy and history witnessed in Hollywood films bearing on the conflict, has received wide-ranging comments in several major studies. Thomas Myers, in the *Encyclopedia of the Vietnam War*, focuses on the continually changing perception and artistic interpretation of the Vietnam War (pp.61-69). I

agree with his view that in the more recent films there have been "overlappings of the style and substance of commercial and documentary filmmaking" (p.68). The tendency towards a greater realism, which is at the heart of the blend of documentary and fiction, can also be witnessed in the opening scenes of a recent Hollywood interpretation of D-Day, *Saving Private Ryan*.

That Vietnam War movies were important for the local community of Brownsville and Haywood County, Tennessee, clearly emerges from the interviews. It became obvious that the members of the local community are interested in movies, and books for that matter - which they frequently mentioned in one breath - that they think portray a "truthful" picture of the Vietnam War. From Vietnam veteran Bill Lea's perspective these products serve a didactic purpose: *Platoon* showed Americans at home what the war had been like. Hence its importance. Christy Smith disliked *Born on the Fourth of July*. *Fortunate Son*, however, is the story that brought the Vietnam experience home to her. She stressed that during the Vietnam War, Hollywood released M.A.S.H., which she and other military personnel serving in a hospital in Japan at the time, strongly disliked. Dr. Al Claiborne was impressed by some Hollywood movies about the Vietnam War. He liked *The Deerhunter*, *Apocalypse Now*, and *Full Metal Jacket*. Dr. Claiborne mentioned that he had been impressed by Neil Sheehan's *A Bright Shining Lie*, calling it "the definitive book about the whole thing" (p.234).

The interviews prove that Vietnam War movies were discussed by both Vietnam veterans and civilians. Their importance is obvious, as confirmed by Bill Lea, in whose opinion "more people in America watch movies than probably read newspapers".

Vietnam War movies were not reviewed in the *Brownsville States-Graphic*, either during or after the the war.

Many of the inhabitants of Brownsville and Haywood County, as the interviews I conducted demonstrate, still live in the place where their ancestors first settled after the long journey from North Carolina or Virginia. Over the years their families have developed a strong sense of place, and have become inured to the climate. Consequently, their whole being is tied up with the land. It is a beautiful country with a predominantly agrarian economy. The members of the community have retained the religious faith of their forefathers. Fascinated with the history of their region, they cherish their common heritage. Thus the relics of the Civil War, or the War Between the States as many Southerners prefer to call it, are still visible in the towns and small communities. The physical presence of the historic battlefields, the cemeteries and the monuments of that war, particularly the statue of the Confederate soldier in the town square, are strong reminders of the war that was lost.

The notion of loss is a crucial one in the minds of the Tennesseans and other Southerners I interviewed. Numerous chronicles, biographies, autobiographies and other works of literature evoke the lost world of the Old South, usually in a romanticized form. The genteel life of the ante-bellum era, in Southern mythology, was destroyed by the war and though the Confederate army fought heroically in the Civil War, the end result was a strong sense of loss that has continued into the twentieth century. The aftermath of the Civil War saw major changes in the region's social and economic structure: of the male population twenty-five percent had died, and the roles thrust upon women speeded up their emancipation. Politically, the South turned against Abraham Lincoln and his Republican party and in the age of Reconstruction it started voting Democrat. It became the solid South. It was only in the era of Civil Rights under Democratic presidents such as Kennedy and Johnson that the South once more turned Republican.

Interestingly, the very Tennesseans who lost the war and complained bitterly about Northern politics in the aftermath of the Civil War, were the same men who one hundred years later accepted the government's authority regarding Vietnam. In the words of County Commissioner Franklin Smith, "when they said we needed to be there [in Vietnam], we did not question that authority" (p.149). Tennesseans have traditionally participated actively in the nation's wars. Lynn Shaw points out that "the acceptance of a war would be greater here probably than in other areas (p.161)." When the country needed them, they were the first to volunteer. In the enthusiastic participation of the Southern military in the course of World War I there may well have been a certain compensatory element for the loss suffered in the Civil War. In World War II all of America, North and South, East and West, contributed equally to the liberation of Europe from Fascism. When president George W. Bush decided to attack

Iraq in March 2003, the South was supportive.

The outbreak of the Vietnam War made it necessary for the federal government to draft young men for military service in Vietnam. As the war continued and escalated, the number of volunteers proved insufficient, and the need for draftees, which until 1966 had been moderate, rose dramatically and because of that became noticeable throughout the United States. As so often before, Southerners showed respect for authority. Their characteristic attitude , as appears from the interviews, was that the young Americans who went to fight in Asia when their country called, did the honorable thing. If they died, they did so serving their country, and in support of an elevated cause. The government remained for them the ultimate authority. In this context it was interesting to find that America's failure to win the Vietnam War frustrated many interviewees. Some indicated they felt betrayed by their own Democratic government. Veterans in particular believed that the decision not to press on for victory was a political decision, not a military one.

There were three significant developments in the field of race relations during the Vietnam War in Brownsville. The most important development came about by legislation introduced, implemented and finally enforced by the federal government in Washington. The Congress enacted civil rights laws in 1957, 1960 and 1964. The white population resisted at first. As late as June 1960 the *Brownsville States-Graphic* reported that the first "negro registrant" had been arrested for disturbing the peace. Washington sent examiners down South. In September of that year a federal civil rights suit was filed against some forty whites, and against two banks for conspiring to prevent blacks from voting registration and for threatening them with economic actions. Further federal legislation in 1965 put an end to this type of obstruction.

The struggle for civil rights culminated in the frequent battles in court over the integration of the city and county school systems between 1965 and 1967. It was not until the summer of 1970 with the opening of a new fully integrated high school that the dust of social unrest finally settled.

The Vietnam War evoked the sense of loss that with Southerners is always present, consciously or not. America's involvement in Vietnam was tragic for the servicemen who lost their lives and their families. It caused great anxiety to the young men who were eligible for the draft. On a local or regional level, however, the war did not seriously affect the social and economic structure of society as had been the case with the war that has made the South into what it is today. As my findings have demonstrated, it is still the Civil War that casts the longer shadow.

APPENDIX

I

The Vietnam War

The withdrawal in 1973 of the last American troops from Vietnam signalled the end of the Vietnam War for the United States, although it took another two years before South Vietnam collapsed.[177] South Vietnamese president Nguyen Van Thieu ordered the withdrawal of South Vietnamese military forces from the provinces just south of the Demilitarized Zone on March 14, 1975. On March 26, Hue was lost; Da Nang fell to North Vietnam on March 30. President Thieu resigned on April 12.

From an American perspective the date when the Vietnam War started is controversial and unclear, partly because it was never officially declared, partly because of the gradual nature of the development of American involvement in Indochina over a prolonged period of time. For the purposes of this study it is the 1960-1973 period that matters. The full horror of the war was brought home to Brownsville and Haywood County, when Danny Presley returned home seriously wounded (Cf. pp.254-261). In Vietnam, on October 7, 1969, he had been inches away from a buddy who had tripped a booby trap grenade. He was back in the United States on November 1. On November 11, Veterans Day, the eternal flame would be lighted for all the local dead and wounded soldiers. Danny Presley was asked to light the flame, but he was so weak that he could not do so. All those present watched him "holding on to it" and helping others present to light the eternal flame.[178]

I will briefly describe the basic facts, events and developments of the era preceding the actual start of the Vietnam War. I will also provide an outline of the war.

For the factual information in this chapter I am indebted to Maurice Isserman, *Witness to War: Vietnam* (New York, 1995), as well as to George C. Herring, *America's Longest War: The United States and Vietnam, 1950-1975* (New York, 1979, Reprinted 1986), and to *Major Problems in the History of the Vietnam War: Documents and Essays*, Robert J.McMahon, ed. (Lexington, Massachusetts, 1990).

The defeat of France by Germany in June 1940, meant that France lost control over Indochina almost simultaneously, Japanese forces based in southern China occupying the northern province of Tonkin. The Japanese promised the representatives of the government of Vichy France that French control of the two southern provinces of Annam and Cochinchina would remain secure. In July 1941, however, Japanese troops occupied the remainder of Vietnam, although they permitted the French and Bao Dai, the Emperor of Annam, to continue to exercise formal authority on paper.[179]

President Roosevelt, on January 24, 1944, expressed the view that "Indo-China should not go back to France".[180] However, approximately a year later he did an about-face and stated that France could retain Vietnam on condition that "independence was the ultimate goal" (March 15, 1945). But Ho Chi Minh, who had founded the Vietminh on May 10, 1941,

proclaimed Vietnamese independence on September 2, 1945. Three months later the first Indochina War started between the Vietminh and France.

Up to this point American involvement in the power struggle in Indochina was of a non-military nature. This changed dramatically when, on May 8, 1950, secretary of state Dean Acheson revealed that the United States would provide arms to the French Associated States of Indochina. This agreement marked the start of active U.S. involvement. Very gradually America was drawn in deeper. The next stage in the development was that a US Military Assistance Advisory Group of 35 arrived in Vietnam on August 3, 1950. Before Christmas, America signed a Mutual Defense Assistance Agreement with France and the French Associated States of Indochina. Four years later the U.S. was footing the bill for nearly 80% of the cost of the war for France. On May 20, 1953, general Henri Navarre still thought France could ultimately win the war: "Now we can see [victory] clearly, like light at the end of the tunnel."[181] Navarre was proved wrong nearly one year later; the Viet Minh took Dienbienphu on May 7, 1954.

An article in *The Washington Post* on June 7, revealed that the Eisenhower administration had considered a large-scale air strike to frustrate the Vietminh siege of the French fortress at Dienbienphu in April. However, the congressional leadership, after a secret meeting on April 3, would only agree if the British were to participate in the military action. The British, however, refused.

> In their memoirs British and American officials confirmed some of Roberts' account [which Chalmers M. Roberts wrote for *The Washington Post* and was subsequently published on June 7]. French memoirists went further, charging that secretary of state John Foster Dulles and admiral Arthur W. Radford, chairman of the joint chiefs of staff (JCS), had proposed an air strike to save Dienbienphu, had even proposed the loan of atomic weapons, and then had callously reneged, sealing France's defeat in the war. However, administration officials at the time and Eisenhower later insisted that they had never seriously contemplated military intervention in Indochina. Eisenhower conceded only that he had attempted to put together an allied coalition to resist communist encroachments in Southeast Asia but had been thwarted by the British.[182]

Within a month of the final French defeat USAF colonel Edward G. Lansdale arrived in Saigon to command the Saigon Military Mission (SMM). The SMM carried out covert operations in Vietnam.

The first Indochina War officially ended on July 20-21, 1954. The Geneva Accords partitioned Vietnam along the 17th parallel, with the Vietminh in control of the North, and a government led by emperor Bao Dai and prime minister Ngo Dinh Diem in the South. The Geneva Accords stipulated nationwide elections, scheduled for July 1956, which would lead

to reunification of the temporarily divided country. American military and economic aid was given to the government in the South from August through November 1954; at the same time American planes and vessels carried refugees from North to South Vietnam. The situation was aggravated when, on July 6, 1955, Diem stated that South Vietnam was not bound by the provisions of the Geneva Accords, because, as he put it, "we did not sign the Agreement". The further implications of Diem's statement were that the elections scheduled for July 1956 did not take place. Instead, on October 26, Diem proclaimed the Republic of South Vietnam. The new country was swiftly recognized by the United States; and president Eisenhower promised further support to Diem in May 1957. The presence of American troops in Vietnam led to serious consequences, when, in October 1957, thirteen Americans were wounded in terrorist attacks in Saigon. Almost two years later the first two Americans were killed in Vietnam in a guerrilla attack on the MAAG compound in Bienhoa (*The New York Times*, July 10, 1959).

At the end of 1960, just before John F. Kennedy's inauguration, U.S. presence in Vietnam had risen to 900; a total of eight Americans had been killed in what was to become the Vietnam War. Vietnam was not regarded as a major trouble spot during the first few months of the Kennedy administration.[183] However, on April 1, 1961, White House adviser Walt Rostow proposed increased American military aid to South Vietnam. President Kennedy approved sending another 500 U.S. Special Forces troops and military advisers. He also authorized covert operations against North Vietnam. At this point, barely four months into the Kennedy administration's term in office, echoes of the president's inaugural address still lingered in people's minds: "We shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival and the success of liberty." In retrospect, it is a fine example of dramatic irony. At the time, at the height of the Cold War, president Kennedy's words concerned the Soviet Union, the most powerful nation in the communist world, rather than Vietnam.

Vice-president Lyndon Johnson visited Vietnam early in May, 1961, as part of an extensive tour of Southeast Asia. Shortly after his return, on May 23, the vice-president met with president Kennedy, advising him to step up American aid to South Vietnam. Similar advice was given later that year by general Maxwell Taylor, who, on November 3, reported to the president about his tour of South Vietnam. He suggested increased military aid, including sending 8,000 U.S. troops under the guise of a "flood control" operation.[184] The gradual increase of the build-up of the U.S. troop level in South Vietnam is apparent if we compare the figure for December 31, 1961, (3,200) with the figure for December 31, 1960 (900). As was pointed out in an article in *Newsweek*, on January 1, 1962, from a technical point of view the American build-up in Vietnam may have been in violation of the 1954 Geneva Treaty limitations on foreign forces in Vietnam. The treaty was never actually signed by the U.S, however.[185]

A concomitant build-up of sophisticated military hardware in the region was the inevitable consequence of the steadily increasing presence of U.S.

troops. Thus, on December 11, 1961, the first U.S. helicopter units arrived in South Vietnam; from December 14, some American aircraft flew combat missions in South Vietnam. On February 4, 1962, the Vietcong shot down the first U.S. helicopter. Approximately one week later sergeant James T. Davis, a Tennessean, became the first American killed by communist guerrillas in Vietnam.[186] On April 9, another two U.S. soldiers were killed by the Vietcong. Yet, U.S. secretary of defense Robert McNamara, while on a visit to Vietnam, claimed "we are winning the war". The following day *The New York Times* ran an article which quoted McNamara as saying that he did not think that the level of U.S. military personnel assigned to South Vietnam would be increased beyond the 6,000 servicemen who then were in Vietnam to advise and train South Vietnamese forces. Yet the article in *The New York Times* claimed that a further 1,000 or more American servicemen were on their way to Vietnam or were getting ready to travel there. As a result of the build-up, the U.S. troop level in South Vietnam reached 11,000 by December 31.

Pictures of Buddhist monks committing suicide by setting themselves alight in the streets of Saigon appeared on the front pages of newspapers around the globe, May-August 1963. Although madame Ky facetiously dismissed the suicides as barbecues, it was no joking matter. The suicides were part of the Buddhist protests against the Diem government. Buddhist leaders criticized U.S. ambassador Frederick E. Nolting, Jr., for denying the existence of religious persecution in Vietnam. They stated that American officials, by focusing on Vietnamese leaders, failed to get to know the people, citing as an example that the ambassador had never been inside a pagoda. On August 21, 1963, the South Vietnamese government attacked Buddhist temples.

Henry Cabot Lodge was appointed U.S. ambassador to Vietnam on August 22. Barely two weeks later president Kennedy appeared in a television interview with Walter Cronkite. President Kennedy's view of communism reflected popular belief; he echoed president Eisenhower's domino theory,

> Those people who say that we ought to withdraw from Vietnam are wholly wrong, because if we withdraw from Vietnam, the communists would control Vietnam. Pretty soon Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, Malaya would go and all of Southeast Asia would be under the control of the communists and under the domination of the Chinese.[187]

President Kennedy's view of communism as expressed in the Cronkite interview, takes us back to what he said in Vienna two years earlier. After the meeting with Khrushchev, he said, "He savaged me. . . thinks I have no guts. . . .We have to confront them. The only place we can do that is in Vietnam."[188]

The South Vietnamese president Diem and his brother Ngo Dinh Nhu were assassinated on November 1-2, 1963, after a military coup.

> By the middle of October. . . the ARVN generals who had plotted Diem's overthrow in August once more approached the United States to determine its attitude. The White House responded that it did not wish to stimulate a coup but would not "thwart" one either. . . . On October 29, Kennedy met with his Vietnam advisers to discuss the prospects for a coup, but once more they reached no consensus. On November 1, the Vietnamese generals moved anyway, convinced that once they succeeded support would flow from the United States. The army installed general Duong Van Minh as president. [American ambassador Henry Cabot] Lodge, deeply involved in plans for the coup, barely lifted a finger to protect Diem and Nhu from the wrath of the rebellious generals. . . the next morning they were murdered in an armored car after having been captured by their military opponents. When Kennedy heard the news his face turned white and he fled the room. He had been one of Diem's earliest supporters; he had wanted him replaced as president, not slain.[189]

The new provisional government in Saigon was recognized by the U.S. on November 4, 1963. Three weeks after the assassination of Diem, president Kennedy was assassinated in Dallas, Texas. Lyndon Johnson became president of the United States, and immediately stated that he fully intended to continue Kennedy's policy. He was convinced that the broad lines of his (Kennedy's) policy, in Southeast Asia and elsewhere, had been right.[190] President Johnson reaffirmed U.S. support for South Vietnam. During his administration the conflict in Southeast Asia developed into a real war. The advisers of the Kennedy era were replaced by Marines and combat soldiers. The Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, passed by the U.S. Congress in August, 1964, was used as "the functional equivalent of a formal declaration of war".[191] The number of American servicemen in Vietnam had gone up again and came to 16,500 by the end of December.

The Vietcong shot down a B-26 bomber for the first time on January 14, 1964. On February 1, Oplan 34A started covert operations, which entailed naval intelligence-gathering and raids on the North Vietnamese coast. On March 1, deputy defense secretary William Bundy advised president Johnson to bomb North Vietnam. Yet, on June 2, Johnson denied that America had any plans to take the war to North Vietnam. After the Gulf of Tonkin incident on August 2, however, America retaliated by attacking North Vietnam. On December 1 and 3, plans for the bombing of North Vietnam were made during a number of meetings that took place at the White House. The war was extended to Laos when,

on December 14, operation Barrell Roll, a secret U.S. bombing campaign, commenced. American soldiers continued to arrive in Vietnam at a steadily increasing rate. This year 23,000 Americans wearing a uniform of one of the armed forces spent Christmas in Vietnam.

Operation Rolling Thunder started on March 2, 1965. It was a sustained bombing attack on North Vietnam that went on, almost non-stop, until October 1968. On March 8, Marines, constituting the first U.S. ground combat units assigned to the war, landed in South Vietnam. In the same month, back in the United States, however, an anti-war teach-in was held at the University of Michigan during the night of March 24-25, 1965. Some three thousand students and faculty attended lectures, and participated in discussions and debates on the war. The teach-ins soon spread to many other American campuses.[192] The next week there were 35, and 120 by the end of the academic year.

The teach-in movement culminated on May 21-22 when over twenty thousand students took part in a thirty-six-hour marathon on the campus of the University of California at Berkeley.[193] The students present at Berkeley included a large number of "veterans of protest" against the Establishment, who wanted to change the structure of their University and more or less wanted another American revolution. Many other protesters simply were there because they were interested in peace in Vietnam. And this, as one demonstrator put it, did not require them to hate their country. In April 1965 Chester Cooper of the National Security Council staff explained the need for an organized effort on behalf of the war. He concluded that the noisy protests against U.S. policy in Vietnam emanating from the universities by no means constituted a majority view.[194]

The Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), an organization that by the mid-1960s had become a leading voice for the student protest movement and New Left, announced its opposition to the war in 1965.[195] A public statement issued to the press in October 1965 explained that what the organization wanted was that "service to democracy should be made grounds for exemption from the military draft". Until this proposal was accepted they felt that they had no choice but to file a form 150 for conscientious objection. SDS organized the first major demonstration against the Vietnam War on April 17, when over 15,000 students marched in Washington, D.C. Despite the anti-war demonstrations in the continental United States, the American war effort in Southeast Asia continued to expand. On April 6 the president authorized offensive operations by American combat forces in South Vietnam. In May 173rd Airborne Brigade arrived in South Vietnam, the first U.S. Army combat unit committed to the war. Secretary of defense Robert McNamara, on June 16, declared that another 21,000 troops were to be sent to Vietnam. In a memorandum for president Lyndon Johnson, he stated that "the situation in South Vietnam is worse than a year ago (when it was worse than a year before that). . .".[196]

The U.S. Defense Department announced on August 3 that the draft

quota would be more than doubled in the following two months. On August 31, president Johnson signed into law a bill making it a federal crime to destroy or deface a draft card. This year, again, the number of American troops in Vietnam had risen. There were 184,300 by the end of December. In late January and early February 1966 senator Fulbright chaired televised hearings on the U.S. role in Vietnam.[197] Millions of Americans watched the hearings on television. The committee received more than twenty thousand letters and telegrams from concerned citizens. Senator Fulbright felt that the hearings filled "a deeply felt need on the part of the American people for an exploration of the reasons" why the United States was once again involved in a war thousands of miles from home.[198]

In early February, 1966, president Johnson flew to Honolulu where he conferred with the South Vietnamese leaders Thieu and Ky. On April 12, America for the first time in the war used B-52s based in Guam in raids on North Vietnam. President Johnson authorized the bombing of Hanoi and Haiphong oil installations on June 29. In the course of the year there had been a dramatic increase in the number of troops sent to Vietnam. The figure of the previous year was more than doubled. At the end of the year there were 385,300 American servicemen in South Vietnam. USAF jets shot down 7 Mig-21s over North Vietnam on January 2, 1967, in the largest air battle of the war until then. The American war effort also benefitted from Thailand's agreement to permit U.S. B-52s to use its territory for flying raids to North and South Vietnam (March 22). Meanwhile 300,000 anti-war protesters marched in New York City on April 15, 1967, where the parade was led by Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Dr. Benjamin Spock, and Harry Belafonte, while 50,000 people marched in San Francisco. Some demonstrators chanted: "Hell no, we won't go," and "Hey, Hey, L.B.J., How Many Kids Did You Kill Today."[199]

Thousands of miles to the west the North Vietnamese attacked U.S. Marine bases near the DMZ with several divisions on May 15. The battle lasted twelve days, resulting in 900 casualties on the American side. In South Vietnam Nguyen Van Thieu was elected president, and Nguyen Cao Ky was elected vice-president on September 3, 1967.

In America,

> widespread demonstrations occurred from California to Washington in October, culminating in a giant march on Washington on October 20-21. The activities ranged from hundreds of vigils, to picketing outside the Whitehouse, to acts of civil disobedience. A group called Resistance organized turn-ins of draft cards. Over 1,100 young men across the country turned in their draft cards on October 16 as thousands more female supporters and adults of both genders applauded their actions. In the days before the march on the Pentagon 3,500 radical demonstrators tried to shut down the army

> induction center in Oakland, California. Police officers waded into the crowd waving clubs, sending twenty people to the hospital.[200]

Over one hundred thousand people gathered at the Lincoln Memorial on October 21. It became the largest anti-war demonstration ever seen. Speakers denounced the president, and demanded bombing halts, withdrawal of troops, and immediate negotiations.

As the leaves were turning in the fall of 1967, McNamara no longer believed that the war could be won by bombing and by sending more troops. He introduced the idea of "stabilization", which was to enable the U.S. "to transfer the major burden of the fighting to the South Vietnamese forces".[201] He also wanted a complete bombing halt, an idea generally rejected by the White House. Therefore, McNamara wanted to resign. In November he left office. In his autobiographical *In Retrospect* (1995), he explained that he did not quite know whether he resigned or was fired.[202] The end of McNamara's career as secretary of defense followed a meeting of the so-called Wise Men on November 2. (In 1965 the group of Wise Men had met for the first time. They had "urged the president to commit whatever forces were needed to keep Vietnam from falling under communist control".[203]) The Wise Men who met in the Cabinet Room on November 2 were Dean Acheseson, George Ball, Omar Bradley, Mac Bundy, Clark Clifford, Art Dean, Doug Dillon, Abe Fortas, Cabot Lodge, former State Department official Bob Murphy, and Max Taylor.[204] McNamara felt that president Johnson asked the right questions at the meeting.

> 1. What could we do that we are not doing in South Vietnam?
> 2. Concerning the North, should we continue what we are doing, should we mine the ports and take out the dikes, or should we eliminate our bombing of the North altogether?
> 3. Should we adopt a passive policy of willingness to negotiate, should we aggressively seek negotiations, or should we bow out?
> 4. Should we get out of Vietnam?
> 5. What positive steps should the administration take to unite and better communicate with the nation?[205]

President Johnson, however, held back vital information that the Wise Men needed to judge the situation, McNamara said. As an example he mentioned that they did not see rear-admiral La Rocque's "devastating report" that the War in Vietnam could not be won. The tone of McNamara's description of the meeting is set by his reference to president Johnson's handling of the meeting ("in his poker-playing fashion"). It leads up to McNamara's sense of disappointment when the president

failed to tell the Wise Men about a memorandum McNamara had given the president the previous day. "It represented my appraisal of the dilemma into which we had steered the country and my best judgement of how we should deal with it."[206] President Johnson never sent a reply to McNamara. Yet, the memorandum that McNamara had given to the president had a profound effect. As McNamara expressed it in his book, "My November 1 memorandum did do one thing: it raised the tension between two men who loved and respected each other-Lyndon Johnson and me-to the breaking point. Four weeks later, president Johnson announced my election as president of the World Bank and my departure from the Defense Department at an unspecified date."[207] McNamara's departure came at a time when the number of American soldiers in Vietnam continued to climb. There were 485,600 at the end of the year.

American involvement in Vietnam came to a crisis in 1968. It is hard to point to one single event as the turning point in the war. Rather it was the accumulative effect of bad news from the theater of war, negative publicity (My Lai), the anti-war protests in America, and the high casualty rate in Vietnam.[208] The North Vietnamese siege of Khe Sanh in the Northwest corner of South Vietnam started on January 21, 1968. Shortly after that, on January 30, the Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese Army began the Tet Offensive. Throughout South Vietnam military bases were simultaneously attacked, as well as cities and provincial capitals. The U.S. embassy in Saigon was also targeted; the Viet Cong succeeded in entering the grounds of the embassy. When he heard the news from Saigon on January 31, CBS Evening News anchorman Walter Cronkite voiced the surprised shock felt by Americans everywhere, when he said: "What the hell is going on? I thought we were winning the war!"[209] General William C. Westmoreland's judgement of the Tet Offensive was that the enemy had succeeded in achieving a tactical surprise as well as some temporary psychological advantage, but that he had suffered a military defeat.[210] On March 10, *The New York Times* reported that general Westmoreland had requested 206,000 more men.

In the United States the Vietnam War dominated the primaries. Senator Robert F. Kennedy announced he would seek the Democratic presidential nomination to change what he called "disastrous, divisive policies" in Vietnam. Richard M. Nixon went so far as to promise the American people that he would end the war. President Johnson, on March 31, in a televised address, announced that he would not seek re-election. He also declared that the War in Vietnam would be de-escalated. Attacks on North Vietnam were to cease, except for an area north of the Demilitarized Zone. Although apparently unrelated to the war, two events in particular shocked America in 1968. First there was the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., in Memphis, Tennessee, on April 4. Then, two months later, senator Robert F. Kennedy, who had just won the California Democratic primary, was assassinated in Los Angeles. In Vietnam general William Westmoreland was succeeded by general Creighton Abrams as U.S. commander, MACV, on June 10.

In the presidential election on November 6, 1968, Richard Nixon defeated Hubert Humphrey. Vice-president Humphrey, assured of the Democratic nomination after the murder of Robert Kennedy on June 6 endorsed a bombing halt, which American negotiator at the Paris Peace Talks, Averell Harriman, had urged Johnson to announce.[211] Johnson, however, did not share his thoughts with anyone on the subject and was delaying making a decision. When he learned that Humphrey had concurred, he was furious. The president seemed so impressed with Nixon that Harriman and Clifford thought he wanted to see Humphrey defeated in the fall.[212] The Democratic party nominated Hubert Humphrey for the presidency at a chaotic convention in Chicago in late August. On the same night Humphrey was nominated, the Chicago police force lost control, "beating and tear-gassing" a crowd of some ten thousand demonstrators who had come to the city to protest administration policy on Vietnam.[213] In a speech in Salt Lake City on September 30, Humphrey stated his own Vietnam policy, endorsing a total bombing halt as an acceptable risk. By the middle of October, Harriman and Vance reached a breakthrough with Xuan Thuy of North Vietnam. The United States promised to halt all bombing over the North, while the communists satisfied the Americans that they would not take advantage of a bombing halt to reinforce their forces in the South.[214]

President Johnson and his advisers learned that Nixon was attempting to prevent a bombing halt before the election.[215] Johnson, then, had the power to give the election to Hubert Humphrey. In the end he decided not to, because he believed that the vice-president "had betrayed him".[216] Nixon was to concede that he would have lost the election if the bombing halt and the negotiations had been announced by the White House three days earlier.[217] Meanwhile the build-up of American troops in Vietnam reached a total of 536,000 at the close of the year. Richard Nixon, during the election campaign, had promised to end the Vietnam War, but as president he did not want to end the war by losing it. On February 6, he stated that there would have to be progress in the Paris Peace Talks before any U.S. troops would be withdrawn.

> As a signal to both Hanoi and Moscow that the United States meant business, Nixon ordered intensive bombing attacks against North Vietnamese sanctuaries in neutral Cambodia, a step repeatedly advocated by the joint chiefs of staff but rejected by the Johnson administration. The military objective of the bombing was to limit North Vietnam's capacity to launch an offensive against the South, but Nixon's primary motive was to indicate that he was prepared to take measures which Johnson had avoided, thus frightening Hanoi into negotiating on his terms. Over the next fifteen months, 3,630 B-52 raids were flown, dropping more than 100,000 tons of bombs on Cambodia. The operation was dubbed . . . MENU, its individual components BREAKFAST, LUNCH, SNACK, DESSERT. At

> Nixon's insistence it was kept secret from the public - and indeed from much of the government - and elaborate methods of bookkeeping were devised to conceal its existence.
> [Also,] the number of civilian deaths among Cambodians will never be known, and to avoid the American bombs, the North Vietnamese moved deeper into Cambodian territory.[218]

In May the controversial battle of Hamburger Hill, locally known as Ap Bia Mountain, took place. Situated in the northwest corner of South Vietnam the area had in effect been an important route for communist forces from the Ho Chi Minh Trail in Laos to the coastal cities in the north of South Vietnam. In the battle 84 GIs were killed and 480 were wounded. Senator Edward M. Kennedy expressed the view that bloody assaults like that were senseless and irresponsible.

On June 8, 1969 president Nixon met with president Thieu on Midway Island. "At the outset of the Midway conference. . .president Nixon announced that approximately 25,000 of the 540,000 U.S. troops then in Vietnam would be withdrawn by the end of August 1969. President Thieu noted that this was possible because 'the armed forces of Vietnam (ARVN) are now able to start the process of the replacement of American forces.'"[219] *Newsweek* reported on July 21 that after years of escalation, America had taken its first step by sending home 814 servicemen of the 3rd Battalion, 60th Infantry, Ninth Division.

President Nixon visited South Vietnam on July 30. On September 16, he revealed plans for a further withdrawal of 35,000 troops from South Vietnam, and on September 19, he announced reduced draft calls for the remaining months of 1969. Yet millions of Americans all over the country participated in local demonstrations against the War in Vietnam on October 15. Away from the Hill, "the revived anti-war movement became more visible in late 1969. The presidents of seventy-nine colleges issued a public appeal for Nixon to step up the timetable for the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Vietnam. Otherwise they feared that their campuses would be engulfed in a wave of anti-war protests."[220]

The president addressed the nation on television on November 3. He discussed the history of American involvement in Southeast Asia since 1954. He stated that the people advocating an American withdrawal preferred the "easy way" to the "right way," that is Vietnamization. What he said was that "for the United States, the first defeat in our nation's history would result in a collapse of confidence in American leadership, not only in Asia, but throughout the world".[221] Nixon concluded his televised address by asking "the great silent majority" of the American people to support him. The president's speech combined with Spiro Agnew's attack on news commentators benefitted the position of the White House.

> The press carried less news of the massive demonstrations in Washington than they had of earlier protests. The White House staff, however, knew that the demonstration was huge. . .On Friday, November 14, thousands of marchers, each carrying a candle, walked solemnly past the White House. As they passed the presidential mansion every demonstrator uttered the name of a dead American soldier. Nixon watched the whole process for about two hours. At one point he suggested that helicopters fly low over the crowd to drown out their voices and blow out the candles. The next day came the rally of 325,000 people on the Mall by the Lincoln Memorial. ..Hundreds of protesters mobbed the Justice Department, where police responded with mass arrests and tear gas.[222]

It was the largest anti-war demonstration ever seen in the capital. The march reached a climax with folk singer Pete Seeger and Fred Kirkpatrick singing "Bring Them Home."

The anti-war demonstration in Washington took place three days after the cover-up of the My Lai Massacre ended with the published report by Seymour Hersh. The killings at My Lai had occurred two years earlier. On March 16, 1968, at 8 a.m., American troops were taken into the hamlet of My Lai in the village of Song My, by helicopter. My Lai was situated near the coast, north of Da Nang. It had long been a center of the Vietcong. Lieutenant William Calley's troops found old men, women, and children, instead of Vietcong soldiers, who had disappeared into the countryside when the American helicopters moved in. The Americans interrogated the Vietnamese, who were unwilling to talk. Soldiers "threw an old man down a well, bayoneted others, and shot children and women running down the road. Then Calley ordered them to push hundreds into a ditch and start firing. When it was over by 11:00 a.m., more than five hundred Vietnamese civilians lay dead."[223]

"In early 1970, Nixon pursued a combination of secret diplomacy, a faster withdrawal of American forces from the war, and dramatic military gestures as ways of bringing the war to a conclusion."[224] The results of Nixon's policy were apparent in the statistics of the number of American servicemen in Vietnam at the end of 1969, when the figure was lower than the year before for the first time since the start of the conflict in Southeast Asia. On January 30, president Nixon stated that the Vietnamization of the war would continue, no matter the level of success at the Paris Peace Talks. Secret peace negotiations commenced on February 21, 1970, between National Security Adviser Henry Kissinger and the North Vietnamese Le Duc Tho. "While Kissinger held out little hope for progress in the public talks with the North, he thought that secret diplomacy might work."[225]

In another televised address to the nation president Nixon announced on April 30 that American and South Vietnamese troops would cross the border into Cambodia to destroy "major enemy

sanctuaries". The extension of the Vietnam War triggered off nationwide student protests. Anti-war protests occurred on a great many college campuses across the nation in 1970. "An angry crowd of about five hundred Kent State students gathered at the center of the campus on Friday, May 1, to denounce Nixon."[226] On May 4, four Kent State University students were killed by the Ohio National Guard. Ohio governor James Rhodes had ordered the National Guard onto the campus after approximately 3,000 of Kent State's 20,000 students had caused disturbances in town, "smashing windows and setting the ROTC headquarters afire".[227] The students had not realized that in Ohio Guardsmen load live ammunition. They threw sticks and stones at the Guardsmen, who first fired tear gas to disperse the crowd, then fired their weapons in response, leaving four students dead and eleven wounded. They fired sixty-one live rounds into the crowd. News of the violent deaths at Kent State resulted in demonstrations at 1,350 campuses, involving four million participants.[228] More than one hundred thousand people flocked to Washington, D.C. "to petition Congress to end the war", following the tragic events at Kent State, and the invasion of Cambodia.[229] Thousands of protesters assembled at the Lincoln Memorial "were astonished to receive a pre-dawn visit from Richard Nixon, distraught over the outrage his actions had produced. . .He asked the students to 'try to understand what we are doing'".[230] To Bob Haldeman who was with him, the president confided that some of the protesters were "bums". In a direct reference to the events at Kent State he said that they were "more concerned with burning and looting their campuses than with studying".[231]

President Nixon declared on June 3 that the Cambodian invasion had achieved its objective. The last U.S. ground forces were withdrawn from Cambodia on June 30. And by the end of the year the number of American servicemen in Vietnam, was lower again than the year before, at 334,600.

"On February 8, 1971, approximately 17,000 ARVN troops crossed into Laos along National Highway 9. The raid, code-named Long Son 719, had the support of ten thousand U.S. troops located just inside South Vietnam, who bombarded communist positions with artillery and air strikes. U.S. army helicopters also ferried the ARVN troops into battle."[232] The operation proved disastrous for the South Vietnamese, who lost half of their troops, and fled in disarray. Television viewers saw pictures of ARVN soldiers holding on to the skids of helicopters in terror, trying to make it back to South Vietnam. These were not pretty pictures. Moreover, they made it plain that the Nixon administration issued a false statement when it declared that the ARVN "had exercised an 'orderly retreat'".[233]

The Vietnam Veterans Against the War protested against the war in Washington, D.C. in April 1971. "The first contingent of an expected total of 1,500 Vietnam War veterans began arriving here this afternoon in preparation for a week-long series on anti-war protests."[234] *The New York*

Times, on April 19, reported that the veterans demonstrations would begin the following morning with a march from a park close to the Jefferson Memorial to the gates of the Arlington National Cemetery across the Potomac River. "The veterans' group had planned a memorial service honoring American and Indochinese war dead at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier inside the cemetery, but it was refused permission . . . ."[235] In addition the Vietnam Veterans Against the War, as the group was called, had planned a "war crimes hearing" at the Capitol. The veterans themselves felt that the demonstrations were "the only way left to us to adequately bring home to this country the true story of what has happened in Vietnam."[236]

Lieutenant John Kerry, U.S. Navy, a Vietnam veteran, appearing before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said:

> I would like to say for the record, and for the men behind me who are also wearing the uniform and their medals, that my being here is really symbolic. I am not here as John Kerry, but as one member of a group of one thousand, which in turn is a small representation of a very much larger group of veterans in this country. . .I would like to talk about the feelings these men carry with them after coming back from Vietnam. . .In 1970 at West Point vice-president Agnew said, "Some glamorize the criminal misfits of our society while our best men die in Asian rice paddies to preserve the freedom which most of those misfits abuse," and this was used as a rallying point for our effort in Vietnam. But for us, as boys in Asia whom the country was supposed to support, his statement is a terrible distortion from which we can only draw very deep sense of revulsion and hence the anger of some of the men who are here in Washington today...In our opinion, and from our experience, there is nothing in South Vietnam which could happen that realistically threatens the United States of America. And to attempt to justify the loss of one American life in Vietnam, Cambodia, or Laos by linking such loss to the preservation of freedom. . . is to us the height of criminal hypocrisy...Each day to facilitate the process by which the United States washes her hands of Vietnam someone has to give up his life so that the United States doesn't have to admit something that the entire world already knows, so that we can't say that we have made a mistake. Someone has to die so that president Nixon won't be, and these are his words, "*the first president to lose a war*" [emphasis added]. We are asking Americans to think about that because how do you ask a man to be the last man to die in Vietnam? How do you ask a man to be the last man to die for a mistake?[237]

The New York Times began publication of the Pentagon Papers, the secret History of the Vietnam War, on June 13, 1971.[238] The government

attempted to forbid further publication by court action. But the Supreme Court freed *The New York Times* and the *Washington Post* on June 30, 1971, to resume immediate publication of articles based on the secret Pentagon Papers on the origins of the Vietnam War.

After president Thieu had been re-elected on October 3, Kissinger tried to keep the secret talks alive by proposing elections to be held within sixty days after a cease-fire, but the plan was rejected by the North Vietnamese.[239] With a view to making North Vietnam rethink its position, American planes bombed airfields and other installations in North Vietnam in one of the heaviest attacks since the bombing ended in 1968 on December 26. President Nixon told CBS interviewer Dan Rather on January 2, 1972, that he had "no other choice but to bomb North Vietnam after the North had stepped up the rate of infiltration on the South and shelled Saigon on December 19".[240]

There were 156,800 American troops left in South Vietnam at the approach of the new year. For the third consecutive year the number was lower than the year before.

The Peace Talks in Paris, France, were suspended by the United States on March 23, 1972, due to "a solid impasse".[241] One week later the North Vietnamese began an offensive, which was the heaviest since 1968. The United States responded by bombing Hanoi and Haiphong for the first time since 1968. B-52s were used to attack targets near the cities. The United States also increased its number of air strikes against North Vietnamese troops in South Vietnam. The operation was code-named Linebacker.[242] U.S. planes dropped 112,000 tons of bombs on North Vietnam in the month of June alone. These included computer-guided "smart" bombs. In South Vietnam American bombers flew round-the-clock missions. Both sides in the conflict sustained heavy losses. Yet the heavy fighting did not basically change the existing stalemate. In a televised address to the nation on May 8, president Nixon announced the mining of North Vietnamese ports; furthermore, rail and other communications would be cut off.

The Watergate scandal which was to become the undoing of president Nixon started quite inconspicuously on June 17, when five men were arrested in Washington, D.C. for breaking into the Democratic National Committee headquarters. This would ultimately lead to the impeachment of president Nixon. On November 7, however, Nixon was re-elected with a vast majority. A little more than a month later, he ordered renewed air attacks on Hanoi and Haiphong. He told admiral Thomas Moorer, chairman of the joint chiefs of staff: "This is your chance to use military power to win this war, and if you don't I'll hold you responsible."[243] Operation Linebacker II, which ran from December 18 to 29, was ordered by president Nixon in answer to the delay in reaching a final peace agreement, for which he blamed North Vietnam. Large numbers of B-52s executed air strikes north of the 20th parallel in North Vietnam. The heaviest raids of the war were carried out in the Hanoi-Haiphong area.[244]

The number of U.S. servicemen in South Vietnam on December 31, had gone down to 24,000.

The New York Times on January 24, 1973, reported that Henry Kissinger and the North Vietnamese Le Duc Tho had initialled an agreement in Paris that day. In a televised address to the nation, president Nixon announced a cease-fire in Vietnam. He stated that all American prisoners of war would be released and that the remaining American force in South Vietnam would be withdrawn within 60 days.

In an article entitled "War Leaves Deep Mark on U.S." in *The New York Times* of January 24, 1973, James Reston linked the Vietnam War to the Civil War, predicting that it would continue to have an impact on America in future years: "America is moving out of Vietnam after the longest and most divisive conflict since the War Between the States. But Vietnam is not moving out of America, for the impact of the war is likely to influence American life for many years to come."[245]

In *Shook over Hell: Post Traumatic Stress, Vietnam, and the Civil War*[246], Eric T. Dean, Jr., argues that ". . .much of our current thinking on the American veteran has been shaped by the image of the troubled and scorned Vietnam veteran that has emerged over the past thirty years in the United States".[247] Using the Vietnam War veteran and the phenomenon of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) as a point of departure he focuses on the "trauma, pain, and tragedy" of the common soldier of the Civil War. Dean points out that what today is known as PTSD, was called "nostalgia" during the Civil War and "irritable heart", and "combat fatigue" or "shell shock" in World Wars I and II. Dean re-examines Civil War and Vietnam War casualties and demonstrates that, contrary to popular belief, the psychiatric problems of the Vietnam veterans were not unique, and that their suffering was not without precedent. Emphasizing the magnitude of the Civil War, he compares the Civil War and the Vietnam War, relating them to the impact they made. The devastating impact of the Civil War, for example, appears from its statistics: 600,000 soldiers died over a four-year period when the United States had a total of 35 million inhabitants. This compares with the 58,000 servicemen who died in Vietnam at a time when the total population of the U.S. was over 200 million. A one-year tour of duty in Vietnam compares to a much longer exposure on the battlefield during the Civil War, when soldiers in the Union Army, for instance, enlisted for three-year terms.

Furthermore, the physical hardships of the Civil War were striking, writes Dean, and he compares the situation of the soldiers in that war to that of the American soldiers in Vietnam who enjoyed "regular R&R, advanced medical care and medivac helicopters, USO entertainment, and almost instantaneous air support at the touch of a button; Civil War troops were lucky if they were fed regularly and if on such occasions their hardtack was not worm-infested".[248] *Shook over Hell* also contrasts the returning of the veterans of the Civil War, "who largely had to fend for themselves or rely on their families" (this applies to the soldiers of the Union Army in Dean's book). To this may be added that a great many

Confederate veterans returned to find their farms and homes destroyed, their farm equipment stolen, and surviving family scattered. In comparison "returning Vietnam veterans were entitled to a comprehensive package of G.I. Bill benefits, including the right to reclaim their old job. . .the right to educational benefits, the right to federally insured home loans at below-market rates. . ."[249]

Dean also compares the literature of the Vietnam War and the Civil War, citing Ambrose Bierce as the only author to come close to the "Vietnam era's negative and nihilistic view of war" (p.204). In addition he mentions a number of Hollywood movies that show American soldiers as victims of the madness of war (*Apocalypse Now* and *Taxi Driver*), or as battle-scarred, disturbed, and determined to create a mayhem (*Heroes, Taxi Driver, Rolling Thunder*, and *The Ninth Configuration*), or movies that portray the veteran as a "survivor-hero" who endured "the madness of war" and the "perfidy" of his own government "that sent him to fight a meaningless war on terms which guaranteed defeat" (Sylvester Stallone in the Rambo movies, Chuck Norris in *Missing in Action*).

The most poignant comparison, perhaps, that Dean makes between the Civil War and the Vietnam War is where he raises the controversial point that "Vietnam was the first war America lost" and points out the sense of loss experienced by the Confederate veterans often returning to a scene of desolation: "houses burned to the ground" and everything gone, the world that they had left before the war utterly gone.

Dean argues, finally, that because the nineteenth century ended with the Southern states introducing segregation laws, it cannot be maintained that the Civil War "was all about antislavery and equal rights" and that if civil rights became an objective of the war, 300,000 Union soldiers died in vain (p.216). In the final analysis Dean's book on PTSD demonstrates that a comparison of the hardships suffered by the soldiers of the Civil War and those endured by U.S. soldiers in Vietnam, leads one to conclude that the Vietnam soldiers were better off.

The signing of the Paris Peace Accords on January 27, 1973, ended America's military role in South Vietnam. In president Nixon's words, America had "achieved peace with honor".[250] But there were few Americans who shared this sentiment, or how would one interpret the words of another American president after another Foreign War, nearly eighteen years after America withdrew from Vietnam? In a radio broadcast three days after the guns ceased firing in the Gulf War, president George Bush announced, "The specter of Vietnam has been buried forever in the desert sands of the Arabian Peninsula."[251] Subsequent events, however, have born out the fallacy of president Bush's claim. First there was the failed American intervention, initiated by president Bush, in Somalia. It was left to president Clinton to find a way out of a messy conflict, which left Americans with nightmarish television images of a dead American soldier dragged through the streets of a Third World town behind an enemy vehicle. "Vietnam all over again," according to senator Fritz Hollings of South Carolina.[252]

Secondly, the heated debates on an anticipated American participation in joint NATO peace keeping operations in Bosnia in the media in the fall of 1996 sparked off numerous references to the Vietnam War. It became clear that many Americans were afraid that Bosnia might develop into another Vietnam. In many letters to the editor, readers mentioned in almost one breath that what made the plans of the Clinton administration so hard to digest was that the commander-in-chief who was ready to send American men to the danger zone of Bosnia, was the very man who avoided military service in Vietnam.

The Vietnam War, then, is a war that will not go away just yet. It continues to be on the minds of many American men and women, and, in all probability, it will continue to have an effect on American politics as well.

II.

Interviewees:

(i) Martha Jane Williams
(ii) Earl Rice
(iii) Hayden and Harbert Thornton, Jr.
(iv) Margaret Kizer
(v) Marceline Jacocks
(vi) Franklin Smith
(vii) Dr. Tommy and Pamela Russell
(viii) Gordon Perry
(ix) Jacob Bond
(x) Jeff Hooper
(xi) Lynn Shaw
(xii) Dr. George Moss, Jr.
(xiii) Laymon Johnson
(xiv) Martha Hooper
(xv) C. Thomas Hooper III
(xvi) Leon King
(xvii) C.T. Smith
(xviii) James Springfield
(xix) Dr. Benny Hopper
(xx) Bob Moses
(xxi) Maltimore Bond
(xxii) Reese Moses
(xxiii) Dr. John Redding
(xxiv) Ned Rooks
(xxv) J.C. Turner
(xxvi) Dixon Hood
(xxvii) Deitra Wade
(xxviii) Patrick H. Mann, Jr.
(xxix) Dr. Ray Dixon
(xxx) Dr. Ray and Kathryn Dixon
(xxxi) Margaret Eddleman
(xxxii) Ben L. Wiley
(xxxiii) Jere Blue Wiley
(xxxiv) David Hooper, Sr.
(xxxv) Dr. Al Claiborne
(xxxvi) Lorraine Regen Thornton
(xxxvii) Sally Thornton Cavin
(xxxviii) Lynn Thornton Mann
(xxxix) Betsy Lane Battle
(xl) Mildred Russell
(xli) Susan Pettigrew
(xlii) Tom Silvia
(xliii) Larry Banks

(xliv) Dr. Arthur Ellis
(xlv) Danny Presley
(xlvi) Colonel Webb Banks, USAF, Rtd.
(xlvii) Bill Lea
(xlviii) Arthur Fox Smith IV
(xlix) Colonel Russell Taliaferro, USAF, Rtd.

III.

Veterans Memorial List, as published in the *Brownsville States-Graphic* in July, 1997, containing the names of local servicemen killed or died of illness during the World Wars, the Korean Conflict, and the Vietnam War. The list was compiled by VFW Post 4838.

WORLD WAR I

Frank Bond
Eddie Barbee
Charlie Bennett
John Crowder
Jim Ferreter
Henry Field
Armistead Grairy
Henry Field
William H. Hicks
Horace Hirt
Humphrey Jones
Paul Jones
Buck Morgan
Tommie Nickson
Anthony Olden
Willie Outlaw
Arthur Smith
Ellis Smith
William P. Stehlin
Sam Taylor

WORLD WAR II

James L. Bedford
Aaron Bond
Bate Bond
Eddie Lee Bond
O.D. Bond
Edwin Bragg
James Byers
Eugene Cain
John A. Chapman
Julian Chishom
Robert P. Claiborne
Robert T. Claiborne
William T. Clark, Jr.

Harry F. Cobb
John R. Coleman
Thomas R. Conatser
John W. Dickenson Jr.
John C. Drumright
Robert Lewis Earnest
James E. Emerson
Willie James Emerson
Willie F. Farrington
Jefferson C. Irvin
Jonas Harbison
Ivory T. Ingram
Vernon A. Jernigan
Johnny L. Keltner
James King
Joseph H. Mann
Alvis W. McCool Jr.
Billy E. McCool
Fred Mann
Oscer F. McWerther
Willie T. Marbury
William H. Outlaw
Henry Perry
Donald Pilant
Fred E. Rankin
Edgar M. Rothchild
Harvey Seymour
Arthur Smith
Henry S. Solomon
George Taylor
Frank P. Thomas
Robert S. Thomas
William L. Thomas
Marion Thorton Jr.
Sam E. Tinsley
James Andrew Voyles
James Weddle
Malcomb C. Wright

KOREAN CONFLICT

Jessie L. Jones
Curtis Lee
Billy Carl Sullivan

VIETNAM WAR

Andrew Currie
William A. Ferrell
James A. Griffin
William L. Haak
Richard K. Johnston
Larry A. Land
Norman E. Lane Jr.
Danny Overton
R.T. Perry
Carl W. Scallions
Albert N. Wright Jr.
Billy L. Wright
James Edward Young

IV

List of Casualties incurred by U.S. Military Personnel in connection with the Vietnam Conflict in Vietnam:

By Home State of Record:

Deaths from 1 January 1961 through 31 March 1973, prepared by Directorate for Information Operations Office, Assistant Secretary of Defence (Comptroller), April 25, 1973.

Deaths resulting from hostile action:

ARMY

1. Coleman Willie, Jr., / Pfc / Service No 63003544 / 20 Feb 46 / 22 Jan 7 / Brownsville
2. Ferrell William Alford / Psgt / Service No 44122065 / 22 May 27 / 17 Nov 65 / Stanton

MARINE CORPS

3. Currie Andrew / Pvt / Service No 2348108 / 17 Jul 45 / 4 Jul 67 / Brownsville
4. Land Larry Adrian / Cpl / Service No 2109537 / 11 Dec 47 / 6 Mar 67 / Brownsville
5. Lane Norman Edward, Jr., / 1Lt / Service No 0100397 / 23 Feb 41 / 29 Mar 68 / Brownsville
6. Wright Albert N., Jr., / Sgt / Service No 414843265 / 19 Dec 47 / 19 Oct 69 / Stanton

Deaths resulting from other causes:

ARMY

7. Johnston Richard Keith / Sp4 / Service No 354404967 / 23 Dec 49 / 17 Aug 70 / Brownsville
8. Perry R.T. / Col / Service No 53812970 / 28 May 45 / 8 Oct 68 / Stanton
9. Young James Edward / Sp4 / Service No 67105530 / 25 Jan 45 / 16 Apr 68 / Brownsville

MARINE CORPS

10. Haak William Lewis / Lcpl / Service No 412861839 / 5 Nov 48 / 25 Jul 69 / Brownsville

As will be seen there are significant discrepancies between the various sources as regards the number of local servicemen who died in the Vietnam War. The Veterans Memorial List drawn up by VFW Post 4838 and published in 1997 shows the names of thirteen men, whereas the List of Casualties prepared by the Defence Department, dated April 25, 1973, contains the names of ten local servicemen. Information received from Tennessee state senator James F. Kyle, dated August 28, 1997, again, at variance with the above indicates a total of eleven local servicemen who died in Vietnam. Senator Kyle is relying on statistics supplied by the Tennessee Department of Veterans Affairs.

My research of the *Brownsville States-Graphic* has turned up a total of eighteen names of local servicemen. Interestingly, the War Monument in Brownsville, dedicated on Veterans Day 1997, also contains eighteen names of local men who died in the Vietnam War, but the monument has four names that were not reported in the local newspaper during the Vietnam War period (Lanny Bolding; David Bullock; Andrew Currie; Carl W. Scallions), whereas four names that were turned up by my research (sergeant Nathaniel Merriwether/ 8 Apr 66; Pvt. James L. McCoy/ 16 Feb 68; Tom Boyd, Jr.,/ 17 May 68; corporal Jeffrey Woodrow Norvell/ 20 Sep 68), do not appear on the monument.

The discrepancy was pointed out to the local VFW post.

NOTES

1. Alessandro Portelli, *The Death of Luigi Trastulli and Other Stories:Form and Meaning in Oral History,* State University of New York Press, Albany, 1991, p.viii.
2. Donald A. Ritchie, *Doing Oral History,* New York, 1995, p.xi.
3. *Ibid.*, p.24.
4. *Ibid.*, p.7.
5. *Ibid.*
6. Courses on the Vietnam War are on the curriculum of colleges and universities all over the world today. In 1995, for example, the special course "Vietnam: 'The Forever War'" was taught at Leiden University. Lecturers included Neil Sheehan and Robert Olen Butler.
7. Stanley I. Kutler, ed., *Encyclopedia of the Vietnam War,* New York, 1996.
8. Charles Reagan Wilson & William Ferris, eds., *Encyclopedia of Southern Culture,* University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 1989, p.321. From here on: Wilson.
9. J. Wayne Flynt, *Dixie's Forgotten People: The South's Poor Whites,* Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1979, pp.3-4.
10. Wilson, p.1109.
11. V. S. Naipaul, *A Turn in the South,* New York, 1989, p.3.
12. Mary Hood, "A Stubborn Sense of Place," in *Harper's,* Vol.273, No.1635, August 1986, p.36.
13. C. Vann Woodward, *The Burden of Southern History,* 1960. Reprinted, Louisiana State University Press, Baton Rouge, 1993, p.xiv.
14. *Ibid.*, pp.xii-xiii.
15. Owen W. Gilman, Jr., *Vietnam and the Southern Imagination,* The University Press of Mississippi, Jackson, 1992, p.52.
16. *Ibid.*
17. *Ibid.*
18. Allen Tate, "Ode to the Confederate Dead" in *Poems,* Denver, Colorado, 1961.
19. *The Burden of Southern History,* p.16.
20. *Ibid.*
21. *Ibid.*, p.190.
22. *Ibid.*, p.236.
23. Gilman, op. cit., argues that "writers for decades will concern themselves with the moral and social consequences of America's lost [Vietnam] War, just as innumerable Southern writers looked beyond the horizons of the great world wars to see the dust swirling around Confederate soldiers' statues." (p.7.)
24. *Birmingham Post-Herald,* March 5, 1996.
25. *The Birmingham News,* July 7, 1996. Gary M. Pomerantz, *Where Peachtree Meets Sweet Auburn: The Saga of Two Families and the Making of Atlanta,* New York, 1996.
26. It has been my experience that the North-South contrasts are engrained in the Southern character. The emotions emanating from the Civil War contrast come to the surface quite easily. In everyday situations this occurs almost invariably in a jocular way. When I attended the in-service training at Haywood High School

in the summer of 1986, a visiting speaker, whose accent indicated he was from the North, said, "By the way, I hear they still shoot Yankees here." Similarly, when a party of farmers from the Midwest visited area dairy farms in Haywood County, the headline in the local newspaper referred to "a peaceful Yankee invasion".

27. Winston Groom, *As Summers Die*, New York, 1980, pp.30-31. The statue of the Confederate soldier in Brownsville, Tennessee, however, faces east, because the Union Army was expected to come from Jackson, Tennessee.
28. Tobias Wolff, *In Pharaoh's Army*, London, 1994, p.183.
29. W. W. Friedman, in "A Holiday In Blue And Gray?", July 3, 1996, p.3.
30. Words spoken by Shelby Foote on videotape, *The Divided Union: The Story of the American Civil War*.
31. Kutler, p.93.
32. November 28, 1995.
33. September 7, 1995.
34. Robert S. McNamara with Brian VanDeMark, *In Retrospect: The Tragedy and Lessons of Vietnam*, New York, 1995.
35. *The New Yorker*, Vol.71, May 8, 1995, p.67.
36. *Vietnam*, Vol.8. No.6, April 1996, p.6.
37. Summer 1995, Vol.CIII, No.3, pp.453-59.
38. Kutler, p.444.
39. "Vietnam War: Washington Was Right," November 7, 1995.
40. Eric T. Dean, Jr., *Shook over Hell: Post Traumatic Stress, Vietnam, and the Civil War*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1997.
41. Chester L. Cooper, *The Lost Crusade: America in Vietnam*, New York, 1970, p.454.
42. Col. Harry G. Summers, Jr., *On Strategy: A Critical Analysis of the Vietnam War*, Novato, California, 1982, p.182.
43. *Shook over Hell*, pp.5-6.
44. *Ibid.*, p.8.
45. *Ibid.*, p.181.
46. *Ibid.*, p.45.
47. June 26, 1996.
48. In *The Virginia Quarterly Review*, Vol.66, No.1, 1990, pp.17-35.
49. Kutler, p.30.
50. *Ibid.*
51. *The Virginia Quarterly Review*, p.24.
52. *Ibid.*
53. *Ibid.*
54. *Ibid.*, p.26.
55. *Ibid.*
56. *Ibid.*
57. Col. James A. Donovan, U.S. Marine Corps (ret.), "Assessing the War's Costs," *Vietnam*, Vol.8, No.6, p.44.
58. 1992, in Ruth D. Weston, "Debunking the Unitary Self and Story in the War Stories of Barry Hannah," in *The Southern Literary Journal*, Vol.XXVII, No.2, Spring 1995, p.97.

59. *Ibid.*, pp.97-98.
60. *Ibid.*
61. *Ibid.*, p.99.
62. John Griffin Jones, "Barry Hannah." In *Mississippi Writers Talking,* John Griffin Jones, ed., Jackson, Mississippi, 1982. In *The Southern Literary Journal,* Vol.XXVII, No.2, Spring 1995, p.99.
63. Barry Hannah, "Midnight and I'm Not Famous Yet," in *Airships,* New York, 1978. All page references in the text are to this edition.
64. Ruth D. Weston has pointed out, in *Barry Hannah, Postmodern Romantic* (Louisiana State University Press, Baton Rouge, 1998), that the majority of Hannah's stories are informed by war. "Indeed, his characters seem haunted by war, especially the Civil War and Vietnam, which often merge in their minds." (p.3.)
65. *Ibid.*, p.70.
66. Gilman, p.8.
67. *Ibid.*
68. *Ibid.*, pp.15-16.
69. *Ibid.*, p.36.
70. *Ibid.*, pp.36-37.
71. *Ibid.*, p.47.
72. *Ibid.*
73. *Ibid.*, pp.49-50.
74. *Ibid.*, p.111.
75. Larry Brown, *Dirty Work,* Chapel Hill, North Carolina, 1989, p.101.
76. *Ibid.*, p.225.
77. *Tennessee Blue Book 1995-1996,* Bicentennial Edition (1795-1996), Nashville, Tennessee, January 1996, p.323.
78. Neal R. Peirce and Jerry Hagstrom, *The Book of America: Inside 50 States Today,* New York, 1984, p.365.
79. *Brownsville-Haywood County Chamber of Commerce Directory,* 1995, p.11. Although the area is predominantly agricultural, Brownsville has a number of manufacturers in industrial parks. However, it has remained a quiet community with small town values.
80. *History of Haywood County, Tennessee, 1989,* published by the Brownsville-Haywood County Historical Society, 1989, pp.234-237.
81. *Ibid.*, pp.2-3.
82. *Heart of the Tennessee Delta: A Historical Guidebook to Haywood County,* Brownsville, Tennessee, 1996, p.1.
83. *Ibid.*, p.1.
84. *History of Haywood County,* pp.237-38.
85. *Heart of the Tennessee Delta*, p.2.
86. *Ibid.*
87. *Ibid.*
88. Wilson, p.658.
89. It is interesting to note that even in the fairly recent past of the 1870s, before modern medicine was available, there was hardly any difference between the way people responded to contagious diseases in medieval Italy (Boccaccio,

Decamerone), in Elizabethan England (during the 1590s when London was hit by the plague several times, the wealthy inhabitants fled to their country seats), or in nineteenth-century West Tennessee.

90. *Heart of the Tennessee Delta*, p.7.
91. Even today the politically correct "African-American" is avoided in Haywood County. "Blacks" is preferred by all the different groups in the area. "Negro" is a dated word. It was used in Haywood County well into the 1960s.
92. Wilson, p.642.
93. *Ibid.*
94. *Ibid.*, p.639.
95. *Ibid.*, p.609.
96. *Ibid.*, 641.
97. *Ibid.*
98. *Ibid.*
99. *Ibid.*
100. *Ibid.*, p.936.
101. *The* [Memphis] *Commercial Appeal* and *The Jackson Sun.*
102. An interesting mistake that I have noticed elsewhere in the *Brownsville States-Graphic* and one that can be easily explained in the Bible Belt where people were and still are as familiar with the word "cavalry" as with "calvary".
103. The announcement was printed on an inside page. Information of this type had lost its urgency and was becoming routine.
104. E-mail message from Ray Dixon to the author, October 31, 1998.
105. This explains why many Americans love *Rambo, First Blood, Part II*, which features a heroic American soldier doing what the U.S. government according to them had failed to do.
106. Cf. Robert D. Schulzinger, *A Time for War: The United States and Vietnam, 1941-1975*, Oxford University Press, New York, 1997, pp.280-81.
107. Kutler, p.442.
108. Oliver L. North and David Roth, *One More Mission: Oliver North Returns to Vietnam*, New York, 1993, p.107.
109. Philip Caputo, *A Rumor of War*, New York, 1978, p.26.
110. Speech of November 3, 1969, *Public Papers of the Presidents: Richard M. Nixon*, Vol.1, pp.901-09.
111. *Tennessee Blue Book, 1995-1996*, p.411.
112. Brownsville is situated in the South, where the legacy of the recent past is still visible today. I refer to the definitions of the Ku Klux Klan in *The American Heritage Dictionary* (Boston, Massachusetts, 1976. Reprinted 1985): 1. A secret society organized in the South after the Civil War to reassert white supremacy with terrorist methods. 2. A secret fraternal organization founded in Georgia in 1915 and dedicated to maintaining legal and de facto segregation of blacks.
113. Cf. The Black Republican Party in the South during Reconstruction.
114. There never was a declaration of war, which is why the North Vietnamese felt the Geneva convention did not apply. Hence captured U.S. pilots were considered criminals.
115. Wilson, p. 640.

116. *Ibid.*, p.642.
117. *Ibid.*
118. The film industry in Hollywood is a case in point. The weather has been regarded as the determining factor to account for the difference between the North and the South by various scholars.
119. Wilson, p.641.
120. *Ibid.*
121. George C. Herring, *America's Longest War: The United States and Vietnam, 1950-1975,* New York, 1986, p.274.
122. Kutler, p.548.
123. *Ibid.*, p.549.
124. The efforts made by the family of Richard K. Johnston of Brownsville is a case in point. I became familiar with the specific details through a letter I received from his sister, Susan K. Pettigrew, also of Brownsville, Tennessee:

> I saw your letter in this week's *States-Graphic* concerning information about associations with persons involved in the Vietnam War. My older brother, Rick, was a helicopter gunner in 1970 when his helicopter went down near the Cambodian border. According to the U.S. Army, all on board were killed. They said that the group was on some sort of early morning mission and they struck "something" in the fog, which caused the crash.
>
> It has been twenty-five years since Rick was killed and besides the void in all of our lives because of his absence, the Army has yet to provide my parents with the Purple Heart. They say there is a backlog of about 10,000 requests and the last time I spoke with them they could not even find the paperwork regarding our request. I am working on other routes to get the Army to take some action on this. I would like my parents to have Rick's Purple Heart before they die.

So far (November, 2003) the Army has been unable to resolve the matter of the Johnston family's request for a posthumous Purple Heart.

125. Richard Reeves, *President Kennedy: Profile of Power,* New York, 1993, pp.68-69.
126. Wilson, p.936.
127. The editorials in the *Brownsville States-Graphic* from 1960 through June 1962 were generally written by Paul Miller Sims, whose death was reported on July 6, 1962. He was born in Crocket Mills, the son of Dr. John and Effie Amos Sims, but had lived in Brownsville since 1917. He was married to Miss Susie Lee Grable in 1914. He was a member of the Church of Christ, and had been an elder of the church for 36 years.
128. In the editorials of the Vietnam War era in the *Brownsville States-Graphic* there is frequent evidence of an atmosphere that may be regarded as the aftermath of the Civil War. Here as in other instances it is a case of the South versus the rest of the United States.

129. It is worth noting that, although in early 1964 U.S. troop presence in Vietnam amounted to 16,300, the War in Vietnam had not yet been referred to in the editorials of the local newspaper by July 1964.
130. The slogan advertized on the water tower in Brownsville.
131. Woodward has found the central theme of Southern history to be Southern history itself.
132. I take the Vietnam War to start in 1960, when president Kennedy was elected; the end of the War for the United States came in 1973, when all U.S. troops were withdrawn.
133. A total of forty-seven people were interviewed: twenty-four were W/M; fifteen W/F; nine were B/M; one was B/F. My original plan of achieving a certain balance in the group to be interviewed, worked out from the point of view of professions, and Vietnam veterans and their families, but did not quite if we look at the black and white ratio. Approximately twenty percent of the interviewees was black. An explanation for the imbalance is that for reasons that could not be explained, a number of blacks declined to be interviewed. On one occasion a black man had originally agreed to be interviewed, but he called back later, saying he had better not. I discussed the problem with Martha Jane Williams, who said, "They just don't trust you." When I asked her how it could hurt them, she replied, "How could any contact with white people hurt you?"
134. Lane College in Jackson, Tennessee, is a one-hundred percent black college.
135. Blacks who had been evicted, lived in tents near Summerville for many months.
136. *A Time for War*, pp. 216, 238-39, 318, 335.
137. For a discussion of the basic unfairness of the draft system, cf. Schulzinger, pp.238-39.
138. *One More Mission*, p.107
139. Arnold R. Isaacs, *Vietnam Shadows: The War, Its Ghosts, and Its Legacy*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, Maryland, 1997, pp.46-47.
140. Dr.Ray Dixon, who was a member of the draft board, said that there were an equal number of blacks and whites on the draft board, but that the secretary was a white woman.
141. As this fragment in the interview with Jeff Hooper demonstrates, the memory of events going back thirty odd years, works like ice melting when the temperature goes up. A leisurely pace or atmosphere is important; sipping coffee or iced tea during a discussion and looking away at the surroundings and the pauses that all this implies, are all inducive to stimulating the memory. For a detailed discussion of the function and use of memory in oral history, cf. *The Oral History Reader*, Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson, eds., London, 1998, especially chapter 25, "Anzac Memories."
142. It has struck me since that many white people that I interviewed invariably came up with lieutenant Norman Lane, Jr., when asked for names of local servicemen killed in Vietnam.
143. Carl von Clausewitz, *On War (Vom Kriege)*, 1832, Anatol Rapoport, ed. Reprinted, London, 1982, p.367.
144. Novato, California, 1982, p.103.
145. *America's Longest War*, p.ix.
146. p.334.

147. p.xi.
148. Wilson, p.1134.
149. James McPherson, *Drawn with the Sword: Reflections on the American Civil War,* Oxford University Press, New York, 1996, p.240.
150. Isabel Colegate, *The Shooting Party,* London, 1980.
151. For the biographical information on Laymon Johnson I have depended on an article by C. T. Smith, originally published in the *Brownsville States-Graphic* in 1995.
152. This was also true of the Netherlands during World War II up to a point. But it was the strict Protestants rather than the Roman-Catholics, who were very patriotic. It was especially Protestants and communists who played an active part in the resistance movement. (Cf. Albert Oosthoek, *De Knokploeg Rotterdam-Zuid, 1944-1945,* Rotterdam, 1990; ----------, *Uit Trouw Geboren: Illegaliteit in Oud-Beijerland,* Oud-Beijerland, 1995). Geert Mak, in *De Eeuw van Mijn Vader* (Amsterdam, 1999) points to the same phenomenon in greater detail: " . . . degenen die het meeste durfden, die de meeste onderduikers hielpen en het meeste presteerden, waren de communisten en de gereformeerden, uiterst links en uiterst rechts, vaak in broederlijke samenwerking. De Gestapo chef van Delfzijl betitelde de gereformeerde kerken ooit als de grootste illegale organisatie van Nederland (7% van de bevolking zorgde voor 25% van de joodse onderduikers.") [". . . it was the communists and the members of the Christian Reformed church, representing the far left and the extreme right in the political spectrum, who, working in unison, were the most courageous. The Gestapo commandant of Delfzijl labelled the Christian Reformed church the largest illegal organization in the Netherlands (7 percent of the population looking after 25 percent of all Jewish persons in hiding." - *author's translation*](p.280).
153. For the biographical information I am indebted to C.T. Smith's article on Leon King written for the *Brownsville States-Graphic.*
154. Biographical information from *History of Haywood County,* p.190.
155. We had just been talking about World War I from the British point of view, remembering that the British government had had an ample supply of volunteers in the initial stage of the war, and how when that changed all the young men were drafted indiscriminately, and that the result had been that many talented intellectuals from the universities had been killed in Flanders and northern France.
156. *Dirty Work,* p.23.
157. A take-off from the North Vietnamese Hanoi Hanna, who tried to persuade American soldiers to lay down arms and go home. Her famous predecessor in the Far East during World War II was Shanghai Rose.
158. Tabernacle Camp, like Joyner Camp, is an annual family reunion and spiritual revival rolled into one.
159. Bob Moses joined the Air Force. He was sent to Texas, then to England, where he worked five days a week and was off on the weekends.
160. Peter, Paul, and Mary also was the group mentioned as an example of protest music against the War in Vietnam by J. Wayne Flynt in a meeting with the author.

161. Richard A. Couto, *Lifting the Veil: A Political History of Struggles for Emancipation,* Nashville, Tennessee, 1993. Interestingly, the local Elma Ross library did not have it on its shelves during the period I carried out research (1995 and 1996).
162. In both Peter Taylor's *A Summons to Memphis* (New York, 1987) and in V. S. Naipaul's *A Turn in the South*, the narrative starts from the perspective of an "ex-patriate" Southerner, living in New York City, for whom it becomes necessary to return to the South.
163. *A Summons to Memphis,* p.22.
164. *Ibid.*, p.26.
165. *Ibid.*, p.36.
166. *Ibid.*, p.42.
167. Biographical information from the *Brownsville States-Graphic.*
168. Biographical information from *History of Haywood County, Tennessee, 1989,* pp.98-99
169. Biographical information from *History of Haywood County, Tennessee, 1989,* p.62.
170. Dr.Ray Dixon probably meant Larry Land, whose name is on the War Monument in Brownsville.
171. *History of Haywood County, Tennessee, 1989,* p.260.
172. *Heart of the Tennessee Delta,* p.69.
173. Tom Silvia's view of the South reflected Faulkner's *Absalom, Absalom!*
174. Apart from the optimism implied in this statement, it is perhaps more than coincidental that Christmas is used as a point of reference. In the late summer of 1914, when the Great War had just started, it was assumed that the war would be over by Christmas. The underlying thought, perhaps, is that in western culture, which is deeply infused with christian culture, the idea of war clashes with the age-old words of "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men."
175. Colonel Taliaferro's description of the U.S. Air Force bombing the Vietnamese jungle, bears a close resemblance to the scene in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness,* where a French naval vessel is observed futilely firing its guns into the dense foliage of the forest on the coast of Africa.
176. The basic rule for victory in war, as formulated by Von Clausewitz.
177. Dr. Henry Kissinger and North Vietnam's chief negotiator, Le Duc Tho, initialled an agreement in Paris to end the war. All American POWs would be released and the 23,700 American servicemen still in South Vietnam would be withdrawn within sixty days. The signing of the Paris Peace Accords on January 27, 1973, ended America's direct military involvement in South Vietnam, although the U.S. continued to bomb Laos until a peace agreement was signed on February 21, 1973, while the U.S. continued to bomb Cambodia until Congress on July 1, 1973, determined that the bombing of Cambodia would end on August 15, 1973.
178. Cf. chapter 3, interview with Danny Presley.
179. *A Time for War,* p.12.
180. Maurice Isserman, *Witness to War: Vietnam,* New York, 1995, p.4.

181. *Ibid.*, p.10. The metaphor goes back to general George Armstrong Custer. On June 27, 1876, he said that he "could see light at the end of the tunnel".
182. *Major Problems in the History of the Vietnam War,* Robert J. McMahon, ed., Lexington, Massachusetts, 1990, pp.133-34.
183. *America's Longest War,* p.76.
184. *Witness to War,* p.28.
185. "Southeast Asia: The Anti-Guerrillas," in *Newsweek,* January 1, 1962, in *Witness to War,* p.31.
186. "Guerrilla Warfare," in *Newsweek,* February 12, 1962, in *Witness to War,* pp.33-34.
187. *Ibid.*, p.44.
188. *Profile of Power,* caption photo #7.
189. *A Time for War,* p.122.
190. Lyndon Baines Johnson, *The Vantage Point: Perspectives on the Presidency, 1963-1969,* New York, 1971, in *Witness to War,* p.48.
191. *Ibid.*, p.51.
192. *Ibid.*, p.67.
193. *A Time for War,* p.227.
194. *Ibid.*, p.228.
195. *Major Problems in the History of the Vietnam War,* pp.475-76.
196. *Witness to War,* p.76.
197. *A Time for War,* p.220.
198. *Executive Sessions of the U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations,* Vol.12, 1966, p.233, in *A Time for War,* p.222.
199. *Witness to War,* p.108.
200. *A Time for War,* pp.240-41.
201. *Ibid.*, p.256.
202. *In Retrospect,* p.311.
203. *Ibid.*, 306.
204. *Ibid.*
205. *Ibid.*
206. *Ibid.*, pp.306-07.
207. *Ibid.*, p.311.
208. *Witness to War,* p.130. On March16, 1968, hundreds of South Vietnamese civilians were murdered by an American unit commanded by lieutenant William Calley.
209. *Ibid.*, p.119.
210. *Ibid.*, p.125.
211. *A Time for War,* p.268.
212. *Ibid.*, p.269.
213. *Ibid.*, pp.269-70.
214. *Ibid.*, pp.270-71.
215. *Ibid.*, pp.271-72.
216. *Ibid.*, p.272.
217. *Ibid.*
218. *America's Longest War,* p.225.

219. George McTurnan Kahin and John W. Lewis, *The United States in Vietnam.* Revised edn., New York, 1969, p.402.
220. *A Time for War,* p.280.
221. *Ibid.,* p.282.
222. *Ibid.*
223. *Ibid.,* p.262.
224. *Ibid.,* p.284.
225. *Ibid.*
226. *Ibid.,* p.287.
227. *Witness to War,* p.168.
228. *A Time for War,* pp.287-88.
229. *Ibid.,* p.288.
230. *Ibid.*
231. *Ibid.*
232. *Ibid.,* p.290.
233. *Ibid.*
234. "Week of Protests of War to Start," *The New York Times,* April 19, 1971, in *Witness to War,* pp.176-77.
235. *Ibid.,* p. 176.
236. *Ibid.*
237. John Kerry, former lieutenant (j.g.) U.S. Navy, testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, April 22, 1971, in *Witness to War,* pp.177-78.
238. Max Frenkel, "Mitchell Seeks to Halt Series on Vietnam But Times Refuses," *The New York Times,* June 15, 1971, in *Witness to War,* p.180.
239. *America's Longest War,* p.245.
240. *A Time for War,* p.292.
241. Liz Trotta, *Fighting for Air: In the Trenches with Television News,* University of Missouri Press, Columbia, 1994, p.229.
242. *America's Longest War,* p.249.
243. *Witness to War,* p.195.
244. *Ibid.,* p.196.
245. *Ibid.,* pp.197-98.
246. Harvard University Press, Boston, Massachusetts, 1997.
247. *Ibid.,* p.5.
248. *Ibid.,* p.180.
249. *Ibid.,* p.181.
250. The number of troops remaining in Vietnam on December 31, 1973, was down to 50. A total of 57,011 American soldiers were killed in the Vietnam War. During the final collapse of South Vietnam, however, on April 29, 1975, two American servicemen were killed by a North Vietnamese rocket in Saigon. They were the last of 47,244 Americans killed in action in the Vietnam War. The fall of Saigon came on April 30, 1975. The total number of Americans killed in Vietnam between 1959 and 1975 was 58,169.
251. *Vietnam Shadows,* p.65.
252. *Ibid.,* p.86.

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INDEX

SAMENVATTING

Centraal in dit onderzoek staat de vraag naar de impact van de oorlog in Vietnam in het Amerikaanse Zuiden.

Brownsville, Haywood County, Tennessee, waar ik mijn onderzoek heb verricht, is een interessant gebied: geografisch gezien bevindt het zich in het Midden Zuiden, terwijl het uit cultureel oogpunt één geheel vormt met het noorden van Mississippi, het Diepe Zuiden.

In het onderzoeksgebied vestigen de eerste kolonisten zich tussen 1821 en 1826. Het land in het westen van Tennessee in de onmiddellijke nabijheid van de Mississippi is vruchtbaar en in 1828 wordt er al katoen verbouwd in Haywood county. Als in 1846 de eerste treinen in het gebied verschijnen, neemt het vervoer over water af. Sinds 1968 stoppen er geen passagierstreinen meer in Brownsville; het goederenvervoer per spoor gaat echter onverminderd door.

Het onderzoeksgebied behoort tijdens de *Civil War* bij het Zuiden. Tijdens de oorlog blijft het er vrij rustig, met uitzondering van enkele schermutselingen waarbij aan weerszijde enkele soldaten sneuvelen.

De Reconstructieperiode (1865-1877) valt de blanke bevolking zwaar. Gedurende die jaren is het Zuiden opgesplitst in vijf militaire districten en heeft men te maken met een bezettingsleger.

Bij het schrijven van dit proefschrift heb ik mij laten leiden door de volgende vragen:
Ten eerste: welke rol speelt het historisch besef bij de bewoners van het Amerikaanse Zuiden in relatie tot de beschouwing van de oorlog in Vietnam? In hoeverre wordt het oordeel over die oorlog beïnvloed door de voortlevende herinnering aan de *Civil War*? Heeft het Amerikaanse Zuiden een geheel eigen oordeel over de betrokkenheid van de Verenigde Staten van Amerika bij conflicten buiten de landsgrenzen?
Ten tweede: welke invloed heeft de oorlog in Vietnam gehad op de continuïteit van de locale cultuur? (Bij deze vraag speelt een rol dat de oorlog in Vietnam voor een belangrijk deel samenviel met de ontwikkelingen op het gebied van de burgerrechten.)
Ten slotte is er de vraag over de manier waarop de geschiedenis wordt beschreven. Zoals Allessandro Portelli aanvoert in *The Death*

of Luigi Trastulli and Other Stories: Form and Meaning in Oral History, omvat geschiedenis meer dan alleen maar "presidenten en generaals".

Het enigmatisch karakter van het Amerikaanse Zuiden blijkt uit de reeds lang bestaande controverse over de karakteristieke kenmerken van de regio en ook over welke elementen daarvan als dominant aangemerkt kunnen worden. De historie van de regio, weer en klimaat, de exotische gewassen, de staten die wel of niet tot het Zuiden behoren, het typerende van de bevolking van de regio, al deze begrippen, en de opsomming is niet uitputtend, zijn in dit verband vermeldenswaard.

Dat het Amerikaanse Zuiden geheel anders is dan de rest van het land valt vooral te verklaren door de geschiedenis van de regio. Toen duidelijk werd dat de Verenigde Staten van Amerika de oorlog in Vietnam dreigde te verliezen, bleek dat vele, zo niet de meeste Amerikanen dachten dat dit de eerste oorlog was die door de Verenigde Staten van Amerika zou worden verloren. Hierbij werd voorbijgegaan aan de perceptie van het Zuiden, dat al veel eerder had kennis gemaakt met het gegeven van een militaire nederlaag. Dit verschil in historisch besef speelt een rol in Bobbie Ann Mason's roman *In Country* (1985) over de oorlog in Vietnam. Mason beschrijft hoe drie generaties *Southerners* op weg gaan naar Washington, D.C., om daar op het Vietnam monument tussen de vele duizenden namen die van hun zoon, vriend, en vader te zoeken. Bij de muur vraagt een schoolkind naar de betekenis van al die namen. Zo maakt Mason duidelijk dat er verschil is tussen de bewoners van het Zuiden, die een duidelijke band met het verleden hebben, en de andere Amerikanen bij wie dit perspectief ontbreekt. Dit verklaart waarom voor velen in de regio de *Civil War* een vanzelfsprekend referentiekader is, en ook waarom de oorlog in Vietnam hier voortdurend wordt vergeleken met die eerdere oorlog.

Zoals blijkt uit de regionale kranten is de herinnering aan het conflict van 1861-1865 nog sterk aanwezig in het Zuiden van de Verenigde Staten van Amerika. Zo verschijnt op 5 maart 1996 een artikel in de *Birmingham Post-Herald* waarin de controverse over de vlag van de staat Alabama wordt belicht. Voor een gedeelte van de inwoners van deze staat is de vlag waarop de "Confederate battle flag" in verkleinde vorm in de linkerbovenhoek is aangebracht, aanstootgevend, terwijl een ander deel van de populatie er juist bij de gouverneur op aandringt de originele "Confederate battle flag" weer van de overheidsgebouwen te laten wapperen. Dit lokt dan weer het commentaar uit dat de *Civil War* blijkbaar nog niet is afgelopen.

Dat de herinnering aan deze oorlog heel intens is blijkt uit de frequente vertoning van *Gone With the Wind*; het blijkt ook uit de hoeveelheid publicaties over onderwerpen die verband houden met de geschiedenis van de regio. De historische roman over Atlanta, *Where Peachtree Meets Sweet Auburn* van Gary M. Pomerantz (New York, 1996), is daar een voorbeeld van. In West Tennessee houdt de plaatselijke krant, de *Brownsville States-Graphic* (oktober 1995) de herinnering aan de *Civil War* in stand door een bericht over ontbrekende gegevens op de grafstenen van gesneuvelde militairen uit die oorlog. Dat artikelen die verband houden met de *Civil War* niet incidenteel, maar met regelmaat in de krant verschijnen, blijkt ook uit een uiteenzetting over de slag bij Perryville in 1996. De krant plaatst in datzelfde jaar een uitnodiging van één van de plaatselijke kerken om een "memorial service for veterans of the *Civil War*" bij te wonen. In 1997, ten slotte, houdt een echtpaar in Brownsville open huis om de geboortedag van Robert E. Lee te herdenken.

De permanente impact van de oorlog in Vietnam op de Verenigde Staten van Amerika blijkt uit het feit dat het vertrouwen van de bevolking in de *federal government* is afgenomen. Dit heeft tot gevolg gehad dat alle presidenten na Johnson en Nixon, veel nauwer met de Senaat en het Congress hebben moeten samenwerken om Amerikaanse troepen naar het buitenland te kunnen sturen. Zo verzekert de voormalige president Bush zich van politieke steun alvorens Amerikaanse militairen naar de Golf te sturen na de bezetting van Kuweit door Irak. Later, in 1995, blijkt de invloed van de oorlog in Vietnam opnieuw als president Clinton overweegt Amerikaanse troepen naar Bosnië te sturen. Meer dan twintig jaar na de oorlog wordt de invloed die Vietnam nog steeds heeft op het dagelijks leven van veel Amerikanen duidelijk uit de berichtgeving in de krant. In de *Birmingham Post-Herald* (September 1995) staat het verhaal te lezen over een Vietnam veteraan die verongelukt, omdat hij ten onrechte denkt dat hij belaagd wordt door de Vietcong als de politie hem met groot machtsvertoon achtervolgt. De publicatie, lang na het einde van de oorlog, van de memoires van Robert S. McNamara, *In Retrospect: The Tragedy and Lessons of Vietnam* (1995), is eveneens een bewijs van de blijvende invloed van het conflict in Zuidoost Azië op de Verenigde Staten van Amerika.

In *Shook Over Hell: Post-Traumatic Stress, Vietnam, and the Civil War*, een gezaghebbend boek over PTSD (*post-traumatic stress*

disorder) van Eric T. Dean, worden de problemen van Vietnam veteranen vergeleken met die van de veteranen van de Amerikaanse Burgeroorlog. In de cultuur van het Amerikaanse Zuiden wordt het verband tussen de beide oorlogen al veel eerder gelegd, maar het is ook waarneembaar in een verscheidenheid van publicaties waarin vanuit wisselend perspectief over de oorlog in Vietnam wordt geschreven en waarin steeds verwezen wordt naar de *Civil War*. In *America in Vietnam* bijvoorbeeld (1970), bespreekt Chester L. Cooper de spanningen die de oorlog in de samenleving veroorzaakt, en Colonel Harry G. Summers, Jr., schrijft in *On Strategy: A Critical Analysis of the Vietnam War* (1980) over de strategische blunders die in Vietnam gemaakt zijn en betrekt deze op de strategie van het begin van de *Civil War*.

Vanuit het perspectief van het Amerikaanse Zuiden is de meest significante link tussen de oorlog in Vietnam en de *Civil War* die van de militaire nederlaag. Voor de Vietnam veteranen uit de regio betekent het einde van hun "tour of duty" dat ze zonder al te veel drukte thuis komen en de draad weer oppakken. Iedereen is blij dat ze er weer zijn; ze worden zeker niet met de nek aangekeken. In het Amerikaanse Zuiden wordt onderscheid gemaakt tussen het beleid van de Amerikaanse overheid, waar men het niet mee eens is, en de loyauteit van de individuele militair die doet wat het land van hem verlangt.

Het contrast met de terugkeer van de *Confederate soldiers* in 1865 is groot. Toentertijd zijn er overal in het Zuiden picknicks gehouden en is er feest gevierd. Belangrijker is dat er in de regio in de tien tot vijftien jaar direct na het einde van de oorlog militaire begraafplaatsen zijn aangelegd voor de *Confederate dead*, dat er monumenten zijn gekomen en dat elk jaar de doden zijn herdacht en dat er aandacht is geschonken aan de veteranen.

In de literatuur van het Amerikaanse Zuiden zijn schrijvers geobsedeerd door de parallellen die waarneembaar zijn tussen de gebeurtenissen in Vietnam en de geschiedenis van de eigen regio, en de verschillen tussen het Zuiden en de rest van de Verenigde Staten van Amerika. (vgl. Owen W. Gilman, Jr., *Vietnam and the Southern Imagination.*) Zo maakt Ruth D. Weston een vergelijking tussen Philip Caputo, die over Vietnam opmerkt dat het de enige oorlog is die Amerika ooit heeft verloren, en Barry Hannah, die in zijn romans en verhalen, de oorlog in Vietnam en de *Civil War* direct met elkaar in verband brengt of laat samenvallen. Gilman toont aan dat vele, zo

niet alle schrijvers uit de regio de beide oorlogen met elkaar in verband brengen in hun romans. Voorbeelden zijn James Webb, *Fields of Fire* (1978), en *Something to Die For* (1991); Bobbie Ann Mason, *In Country* (1985); Jayne Ann Phillips, *Machine Dreams* (1984); Larry Brown, *Dirty Work* (1989), en *Forrest Gump* (1986) van Winston Groom.

Overal in het Amerikaanse Zuiden is er vanaf het begin een nauwe band tussen de plaatselijke krant en de blanke bevolking. Aan het zwarte deel van de bevolking wordt weinig aandacht besteed in de regio en Brownsville vormt daarop geen uitzondering. Wel publiceert de plaatselijke krant vanaf de aanvang van de Amerikaanse betrokkenheid in Vietnam, informatie over militairen in Vietnam zonder onderscheid te maken in de berichtgeving tussen blank en zwart. Tussen 1960-1973 beheersen de oorlog in Vietnam en de plaatselijke problemen met betrekking tot de strijd rond de burgerrechten het plaatselijke nieuws op de voorpagina. Voor het eerst in 1950 wordt Vietnam in de *Brownsville States-Graphic* genoemd, en in februari 1961 schrijft de krant dat er militairen uit Brownsville zijn opgeroepen in verband met oplopende spanningen in dat land. In september 1962 publiceert de krant een verslag over de oorlogservaringen van een plaatselijke helicopterpiloot. Eveneens is er nieuws over een neergeschoten piloot, afkomstig uit West Tennessee, die vermist wordt in Noord Vietnam. Met enige regelmaat schrijft de krant ook over gewonde en gesneuvelde militairen afkomstig uit Brownsville en Haywood county.

De strijd om de burgerrechten in het onderzoeksgebied komt slechts langzaam op gang. Een verklaring hiervoor is dat Haywood county, waar de zwarte bevolking hoofdzakelijk woont, een uitgestrekt gebied is. Dat het dan toch tot een langslepend conflict uitgroeit, komt mede door een activist afkomstig uit Connecticut. Voorts speelt de Highlander Folk School in Grundy county een belangrijke rol in het bewustwordingsproces van de zwarte bevolking. In juni 1960 wordt de eerste zwarte die zich wil laten registreren gearresteerd op grond van verstoring van de openbare orde. In de zomer van 1961 komen verslaggevers van de nationale media naar Brownsville om verslag te doen over het conflict, dat zo hoog is opgelopen dat werkgevers zwarte werknemers ontslaan als die zich laten registreren om te kunnen stemmen. Vervolgens worden deze werknemers uit hun huis gezet, waardoor de noodzaak ontstaat voor

hen die door deze maatregel zijn getroffen een tentenkamp in te richten. Eén en ander leidt tot een rechtszaak tegen 27 blanke landeigenaren en twee plaatselijke banken. Tot in de wijde omtrek (New Orleans, Washington, en Memphis) besteedt de regionale pers aandacht aan deze zaak. Ook NBC en CBS komen naar Brownsville en zenden een interview met de burgemeester uit. Intussen verwijst de rechtbank in Memphis de zaak door naar het *Circuit Court of Appeals* in Cincinnati. De federale overheid trekt zich het lot aan van de bewoners van het tentenkamp en stuurt voedselpakketten. In mei 1962 bericht de *Brownsville States-Graphic* dat er een schikking is getroffen, waardoor het twee jaar durende conflict ten einde komt. Een jaar later worden voor het eerst twee zwarte politieagenten aangenomen.

In augustus 1965 begint de volgende ronde in de strijd om de burgerrechten. De NAACP dringt aan op volledige integratie van het onderwijs in city en county. In Brownsville probeert de "School Board" de ontwikkeling in deze richting te vertragen door het *Freedom of Choice* plan te lanceren, waarbij plaatsing afhangt van eventuele beschikbaarheid. Het gevolg is dat een zeer gering aantal zwarte kinderen op een blanke school wordt geplaatst. Dan bemoeit de federale overheid er zich mee en volgt een rechtszaak. (juni 1967) Getuigenverklaringen maken duidelijk dat vele zwarten uit angst geen gebruik hebben gemaakt van de mogelijkheid tot vrije schoolkeuze. Dat er door de onontkoombare integratie van de diverse scholen een gespannen sfeer heerst in Brownsville en Haywood county blijkt uit andere getuigenverklaringen, waarbij aanslagen op gebouwen en *cross-burnings* genoemd worden. Hieraan komt een eind als de "School Boards" van de rechtbank het bevel krijgen om blanke docenten op zwarte scholen te benoemen en omgekeerd. Volledige integratie volgt in 1970 met de bouw van een nieuwe High School. Een betrekkelijk kleine groep weigert te integreren en richt een particuliere school, de Tennessee Academy op, die echter geen lang leven beschoren is. In 1985 bestaat deze niet meer.

Tijdens de oorlog in Vietnam zijn het vooral de blanken in Brownsville en Haywood county die de *Brownsville States-Graphic* lezen. Het is vooral hun informatiebulletin.

De dienstplicht is één van de aspecten van de oorlog waaraan de plaatselijke krant veel aandacht besteedt, in cartoons, maar zeker ook in de commentaren van Ed Jones, die in die periode namens de

Democraten in het Congress zit. Jones heeft kritiek op de manier waarop de Verenigde Staten van Amerika militairen voor Vietnam selecteert. ("Whether a young man is drafted or not often depends on where he lives and the policy followed by his local Draft Board.") In augustus 1967 neemt het aantal berichten over militairen in Vietnam zodanig in omvang toe, dat de redactie een speciale rubriek opent. (With Our Servicemen) Op 17 december 1971 verschijnt de speciaal aan Vietnam gewijde kolom voor het laatst. Uit het onderzoeksgebied hebben in totaal honderdenelf militairen in Vietnam gediend, waaronder vijftig beroepsmilitairen. De overigen zijn geselecteerd door de plaatselijke "Draft Board", of zijn als vrijwilliger gegaan.

Dat de berichtgeving over plaatselijke militairen, blank en zwart, in Vietnam in alle oorlogsjaren in de *Brownsville States-Graphic* zo systematisch en gedetailleerd is geweest, is van grote betekenis. Hierdoor is de krant een belangrijke bron geworden in het onderzoek naar aantal en identiteit van de gesneuvelde militairen. Uit de berichtgeving in de krant kan worden vastgesteld dat achttien militairen uit het onderzoeksgebied zijn omgekomen in Vietnam. Deze gegevens zijn van wezenlijke betekenis bij het definitief vaststellen van de namen op het oorlogsmonument voor het *Courthouse* in Brownsville, waarop nu slechts dertien namen staan vermeld.

Om te kunnen vaststellen wat de invloed van de oorlog in Vietnam geweest is in Brownsville en Haywood county, Tennessee, heb ik voorts een doorsnee van de bevolking geïnterviewd. Deze interviews vormen een belangrijke bron voor het onderzoek. Ten einde een zo helder mogelijk beeld te krijgen is onderscheid gemaakt tussen burgers en militairen, en binnen de laatste groep tussen beroepsmilitairen en de overigen, waarbij de vrijwilligers weer een eenheid op zichzelf zijn.

Vanuit het perspectief van het onderzoeksgebied blijken de volgende onderwerpen van belang te zijn: de dienstplicht in samenhang met vrijstelling van diezelfde dienstplicht, reacties op de dood van uit het onderzoeksgebied afkomstige militairen, studenten-protesten en anti-Vietnam protesten, de domino theorie, de ARVN (het Zuid-Vietnamese leger), de bestaande controverse over de vraag of de Verenigde Staten van Amerika de oorlog hadden kunnen winnen, en de vraag over de impact van de oorlog in Vietnam op het leven van de plaatselijke bevolking.

Er is veel kritiek op de *draft*, de dienstplicht ingevoerd met het

oog op de oorlog in Vietnam. Studenten zijn automatisch vrijgesteld en degenen die over een netwerk, politieke macht of geld beschikken zorgen er voor dat hun zonen en die van hun familie of vrienden niet naar Vietnam gaan, zoals bijvoorbeeld in het geval van de gouverneur van de staat Tennessee, die zijn politieke macht gebruikt om zijn zoon bij de National Guard in Memphis te krijgen. Het onderzoek maakt duidelijk dat vooral de jonge mannen van de laagste sociale klasse in Vietnam hebben gediend. Dit aspect wordt in de cartoons over dit onderwerp in de plaatselijke krant niet ten onrechte benadrukt. Sommige geïnterviewden, met name zij die niet over voldoende financiën of een netwerk van invloedrijke vrienden hebben kunnen beschikken, zijn daar nog steeds zeer bitter over.

Van de demonstraties gericht tegen de oorlog in Vietnam, heeft Kent State de meeste indruk gemaakt in Brownsville en Haywood county. De interviews maken duidelijk dat de studenten van de universiteiten in het Zuiden veel rustiger en ordentelijker hebben gedemonstreerd dan elders. In het onderzoeksgebied is in het geheel niet tegen de oorlog is Vietnam gedemonstreerd.

In de zestiger jaren wordt het communisme in West Tennessee evenzeer gewantrouwd als in de rest van de Verenigde Staten van Amerika, zoals in verschillende interviews wordt bevestigd. De opvattingen over de importantie van Vietnam lopen echter sterk uiteen. Zo noemt Dr. Thomas D. Russell III Vietnam één van de belangrijkste dominostenen, terwijl Dr. George Moss, Jr., zegt dat het communisme ergens een halt moet worden toegeroepen, en dat Vietnam even geschikt is om dat te doen als iedere andere plaats.

Het beeld dat in de bestaande literatuur over de ARVN wordt geschetst, wordt bevestigd door Vietnam veteraan Danny Presley uit Brownsville. Gedetailleerd beschrijft Presley hoe de Zuid-Vietnamese militairen zich lafhartig gedragen op het slagveld. De zgn. Kit Carson scouts (voormalige VC die zijn overgelopen naar de Amerikanen), schieten gericht op hen omdat ze weten dat de helft van het Zuid-Vietnamese leger tot het vijandelijke kamp behoort.

De vraag of de Verenigde Staten van Amerika de oorlog in Vietnam hadden kunnen winnen is nog steeds actueel in het Amerikaanse Zuiden, ook in Brownsville en Haywood county, Tennessee. Wat door velen in de interviews wordt benadrukt is dat Amerika de oorlog niet heeft kunnen winnen, omdat de militairen door de Amerikaanse regering zijn gedwongen te vechten "met één hand op de rug". Opmerkelijk is dat de Vietnam veteranen een genuanceerder standpunt innemen dan zij die de oorlog via de media vanuit West Tennessee hebben gevolgd. De thuisblijvers zijn vrijwel

unaniem van mening dat de Verenigde Staten van Amerika de oorlog hadden kunnen winnen, maar enkele veteranen zijn daarover een andere mening toegedaan.

Wat dertig jaar na het einde van de oorlog in Vietnam opvalt is dat de impact van de *Civil War* de latere oorlog overschaduwt. Tijdens het onderzoekt valt op dat sommige geïnterviewden er de voorkeur aangeven om over het conflict van 1861-1865 te spreken. Duidelijk is dat voor velen in het Zuiden de *Civil War* nog steeds het referentiekader is.

Dat de Hollywood films over de oorlog in Vietnam belangrijk zijn voor de bevolking van Brownsville en Haywood county blijkt heel duidelijk uit de interviews. Vooral ook omdat film (en televisie) voor de plaatselijke bevolking en die van de regio bepalend zijn voor de beeldvorming, zoals blijkt uit het interview met Vietnam veteraan Bill Lea ("I think that more people watch movies than probably read newspapers.").

De interviews alsmede het onderzoek van de plaatselijk krant tonen in de eerste plaats aan dat de regio alle kenmerken vertoont van de cultuur van het Diepe-Zuiden. Het is een agrarisch gebied, waar katoen nog steeds het belangrijkste gewas is. De plantagecultuur die er aan ten grondslag ligt, leeft nog voort in de typisch Zuidelijke gastvrijheid, generositeit, de overvloedige maaltijden en de prachtig onderhouden huizen en tuinen.

Daarnaast blijkt uit het onderzoek dat de liefde voor het vaderland in het Zuiden groter is dan in de rest van het land. Deze karakteristiek hangt enerzijds samen met de religieuze geaardheid van de bevolking en anderzijds met de verbondenheid met het land: de meerderheid woont er al generaties lang.

In het Zuiden is het belangrijkste verschil tussen de oorlog in Vietnam en de Burgeroorlog, dat een betrekkelijk gering aantal families getroffen is door het conflict in Zuidoost-Azië, terwijl de Burgeroorlog een ieder in het Zuiden verlies heeft toegebracht, niemand uitgezonderd. Het onderzoek maakt duidelijk dat de gedachte aan het conflict van 1861-1865 nog tastbaar aanwezig is. Een gedeelte van de geïnterviewden heeft bezwaar gemaakt tegen de term *Civil War*. Tot op de dag van vandaag spreken sommigen liever over de *War Between the States* of een variant hiervan. In dit verband spreekt het portret van generaal Robert E. Lee, dat bij een aanzienlijk aantal bewoners van het Zuiden als vanzelfsprekend aan de muur hangt, boekdelen.

De oorlog in Vietnam was in Brownsville, Haywood county,

Tennessee in de zestiger jaren geen brandende kwestie. Het was een tragedie die niet verder reikte dan de individuele gevallen van een geliefde die sneuvelde of gewond raakte, of gevangen werd genomen. Vietnam vormde voor het onderzoeksgebied een ramp van beperkte omvang. De Burgeroorlog daarentegen is de oorlog die maar niet wil verdwijnen. Zoals één van de geïnterviewden het verwoordt: "There is still a whole lot of people that still live in the Civil War."

CURRICULUM VITAE

Jan Voogt werd geboren in Rozenburg op 17 juli 1944. Hij studeerde Engels aan het Barnet Evening College for Further Education, Barnet, Herts., Engeland; de School voor Taal- en Letterkunde, 's-Gravenhage; de Nutsacademie, Rotterdam en de State University of New York at Potsdam. Vanaf 1977 studeerde hij Engelse Taal- en Letterkunde aan de Rijksuniversiteit Leiden. Hij legde op 16 februari 1981 het doctoraalexamen af, met als bijvak Algemene Literatuurwetenschap.

Vanaf 1969 is hij docent Engels, achtereenvolgens aan de Marnix Mavo, Maassluis (1969-1970), Chr. Mavo, Pernis (1970-1977), en het Melanchthon College, Rotterdam (1977-heden), met tweemaal een onderbreking van een jaar. In 1986-1987 was hij in het kader van een uitwisselingsprogramma, daartoe in staat gesteld door een Fulbright beurs, docent Engels aan de Haywood High School, Brownsville, Tennessee, U.S.A. In 1995-1996, opnieuw met een Fulbright beurs, doceerde hij Engelse literatuur aan het Jefferson State Community College, in Birmingham, Alabama, U.S.A.